

# ancestry

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MARCH/APRIL 2008

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## Unburying Treasures

Once in a while an unexpected family treasure falls in your lap. Some think of these happenings as serendipitous. Some think of them as small miracles. Whatever you think they are, they sometimes happen.

The first time this happened to me, I was looking for someone else's ancestors. My client believed that an ancestor had owned property in Chicago in the 1860s, but the ancestor didn't show up in city directories, and the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 had destroyed county records. Despite thinking it was a hopeless cause, I did all I could to find proof. Nothing. Eventually I stopped searching.

Two years later, I introduced friends from the Genealogical Society of Utah to record custodians at a private title insurance company that held the only surviving land records that pre-dated the Chicago fire (GSU wanted to microfilm these treasures). As we entered a room filled with large ledger books, the custodian offered to show us a sample. Randomly grabbing one off the shelf, the ancient book fell open to a beautifully handwritten page. No one could understand my gasp of astonishment—I was looking at the name of the former client's ancestor, a legal description of his property, and proof of the 1860s transactions. What made the custodian pull that particular ledger? Why did it fall open to that page?

Another time, it was my own family history at stake. For 30 years, I'd been searching for my Great-Grandfather Dyer's parents' names. One day as I was leaving a genealogical conference, a man approached me. He had been told that I had some Brooklyn ancestors and he had indexed some long-forgotten church records for the city. Having already spent too much on books that day, I hesitated. In the end, he talked me into buying his *Bishop Laughlin's Dispensations* book. I about jumped from my seat on the plane ride home when thumbing through the book; I found a dispensation for my Protestant great-grandfather to marry a Catholic and the previously unknown names of his French father and English mother. Would I have found the names in any other way?

More recently, it happened for my daughter Juliana Szucs Smith. For decades I'd been searching for the origins of our ancestor James Kelly. Like panning for gold in the creek near our house, searching for such a common surname in New York City probably wasn't going to yield anything. Then came the eureka! phone call from Juliana. When the Emigrant Savings Bank records became available on Ancestry.com, she found an 1857 account for James Kelly. Incredibly, it provided his deceased wife's maiden name, names of his children, previous residence in Halifax, and his birthplace in Donegal. There wasn't any cash left in his bank account, but for us, the surviving information was like pure gold.

Some people say our ancestors are working with us because they want to be found. If that's the case, I certainly hope that their unexplainable help will lead you to long-ago buried family treasures.

*Loretto D. Szucs*  
LORETTO (LOU) DENNIS SZUCS, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

LSZUCS@TGN.COM









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BY KELLY BURGESS

Did Great-Grandpa really bury his fortune in the backyard? Learn about people who struck it rich or are still looking and why Gramps didn't put his cash in a bank like everyone else.



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Who would have guessed that our modern commerce system stemmed from pig trading? See how society and money evolved.

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BY JON ENTINE

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BY PAUL RAWLINS

Caution! Not all ancestors' names are as they appear. Meet family historians who learned this fact the hard way.



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Cover image by Joey Gates, illustrator of *Bad Baby Names: The worst true names parents saddled their kids with—and now you can too!* (see p.53 for more)



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BY STEPHEN C. YOUNG

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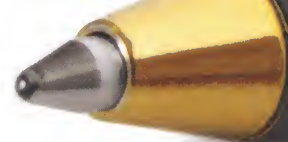
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The Man, in his many forms, has been keeping society down for years.

BY IAN POPE



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## Why Only Slaves?

Why does advice given to African American genealogists almost always come back to some sort of slave reference? The family that I am researching were never slaves, so there is no slave owner to track. They were recorded on census documents before the magical 1870 census. As a matter of fact, if the family legends are true, the family has been in this country since the 1600s. My problem is that New Jersey didn't participate in the census until 1830. Please occasionally give a nod and advice to those of us who are descendants of free African American men and women.

CHARLES DAVIS

### Emphasize the Positive

I have been trying to research a family legend that a great-great-grandmother was part Native American—in this case, Lenni Lenape. While I realize that the likelihood of finding irrevocable proof that my great-great-grandmother was descended from the Lenni Lenape is small, I believe that it can be done. I was extremely disappointed that your article (“Tracing Native American Ancestors,” January/February 2008) did not address other tribal research resources, such as the Moravians in the northeast, who do have records that explicitly cite marriages between Indians and Indians and Whites. The author focused on the particular question related to the Cherokee Indians and completely ignored the hundreds of other possible tribal research opportunities out there. If you want to provide meaningful articles to your readers, take a can-do attitude, not just a list of “No’s.”

MARY E. MALYSZKA

### Scots or Irish?

I’ve heard and read that the Scots-Irish were sometimes called “Ulster Scots,” but never “Ulster Irish.” Was this perhaps an error?

GREGORY LITTLE

### Dutch Details

I would like to point out that Heymans could have been a shortcut for Heiermans, Heyermans, or Heijermans (“It’s All Dutch to Me,” January/February 2008). The name Karl is more German than Dutch. The

Dutch equivalent would be Karel. Karl would have been found more often in Limburg Province, close to the German border (the Limburg dialect has lots of German expressions). Many Dutch have “van” in front of their name. In a lot of cases that means they came from a village with that name. Also, when Napoleon took over Holland, he forced everyone to register a surname. Some people stopped off at the tavern on their way to the registration office, hence some very beautiful names that are impossible to translate.

JOHAN KAREL LOUIS HESSELT VAN DINTER

### Judge by the Cover

I’m sure you thought the idea of using superheroes to title the stories was extremely clever, but to me it was extremely distracting. I do not intend to stop reading your magazine, but I’m afraid I feel you’ve gone too far in updating the style.

SANDRA JACQUES

### Returning with Favor

I have been wishing for years for a genealogy magazine with stories of actual research, and the number of stories in the January/February 2008 issue of Ancestry came really close. Although there will always be a need for “how-to” (I have yet to skip over an article on how to organize), I wonder if the myth that all genealogy can be done on the Internet is because of the plethora of databases on line—and the dearth of articles like the ones in your most recent issue.

JANET EVERTSEN

## Something on Your Mind?

Send your comments, letters, and opinions to [editor@ancestrymagazine.com](mailto:editor@ancestrymagazine.com).



## You Asked

### A Pinch of Grotha ...

To Jan Stauffer—my German grandmother used to make something like “Grotha Clump”, but it was called Groten Hans or Mehlbeutel (Flour Bag). It’s a dumpling that you cook inside a cloth bag; the prunes with lemon juice and cinnamon (cooked separately) make a syrup. There’s no set number of prunes, just as many as you want.

DJ O'BRIEN

### ... A Dash of Clump

“Grotha” sounds to me like a form of Plattdeutsch, meaning large, big, great, pronounced “growta” (the “h” is silent). Clump means a clump or lump and would rhyme with the sound in oomph. So a grotha clump would be some large dumpling mass.

MARIAN BECKMAN

### Naming Un-conventions

In tracing my grandfather and his family in the 1880 census, without realizing it I reversed my great-grandfather's name, Ilg Pius instead of Pius Ilg. And there it was showing the whole family listed under my great-grandfather's first name. Probably because of his strong German accent, it was listed incorrectly on the census.

RICHARD ILG

### What to Do with Everything

I am getting to the point where I have to think about who will get my genealogy stuff—books, files, family notebooks, FTM family files, etc. I have no one in my family interested enough to want them. Does anyone have an answer for this kind of problem?

JUDY LINENFELSER

*Q: My adoption papers state that my birth surname was Yackiek, but I haven't been able to find anyone else in the world with this name. I haven't been able to obtain a copy of my original birth certificate to date because of the regulations of the state where I was born. Can anyone help?*

SANDY BOWMAN

**A:** We decided to take a stab at Sandy's adoption story, thinking for sure we could find something because the name is so unusual. A Google search result shows that Sandy has been working on the adoption problem for a long time ... but otherwise, it turned up little more.

We had a hunch that the name was Eastern European and possibly Jewish. We tried spelling it with a Y and a J in searches. We were especially hopeful when we went to JewishGen.org and found 23 matches, but none of them turned out to be the right spelling after all. We learned via Sandy's research that her father was in the Navy with links to California. We poked around in California indexes and the Military Grave Locator. Still nothing. We turned to our good friend Gary Mokotoff for help.

From: Gary Mokotoff  
To: Lou Szucs  
Subject: Unusual name

I maintain a Consolidated Surname Index at Avotaynu.com that contains more than 700,000 surnames, mostly Jewish. Yackiek is not in the list with J or Y. It sounds very Slavic, and I am sure it is misspelled. Using Google, Yackeik barely exists and Jackiek is not of much help. Jaczek is a Slavic surname.

GARY

Sandy's story reminded us of the time Lou wrote an editor's note about our Huggins name and research in Ireland. A woman went to her local library and found the article from a Google search. We still haven't proved it, but there's a good possibility that we are related. The lesson learned is that sometimes broadcasting a story and a name will provide the solution—try placing the name and the story on message boards and similar places where the bigger search engines will pick it up; the audience is widened dramatically and the story is archived. Even if the results are not immediate, the chances of the story being found are increased because they can be found years later.

Sandy, you might also have better results if you post your story all in one place—while we were able to find quite a bit of information already posted by you, we had to dig through a number of sites to collect all the details.

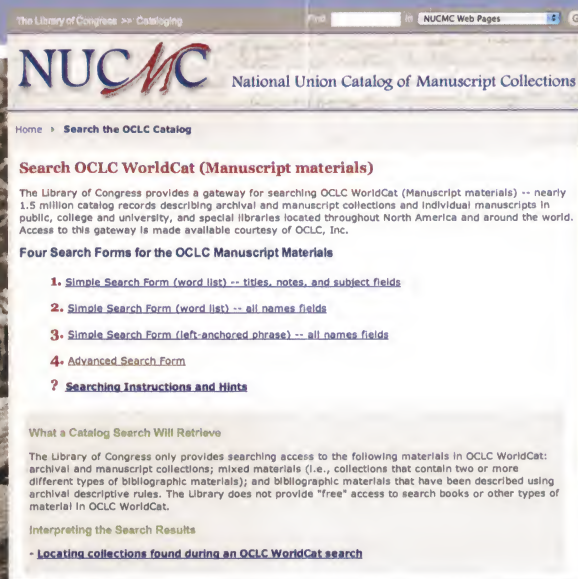
And note that the potential misspelling of the name is huge—the Y and J were often interchanged. We have Serbian friends with the last name of Yekich, and that triggered the idea of replacing vowels in the name. That exercise pointed to countless spelling possibilities. You may want to consider doing a more thorough surname study by plugging multiple spelling variants into as many search engines as possible.

*Send your family history puzzlers to Ancestry Magazine Executive Editor Lou Szucs and Ancestry Weekly Journal Editor Juliana Szucs Smith at [editor@ancestrymagazine.com](mailto:editor@ancestrymagazine.com).*



# Great-Grandpa's Great Hiding Place

BY BOBBY DOBBINS TITLE



IN 1857, MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER, James S. Dobbins, disappeared off the records in Kansas and didn't show up again until he enlisted in the Union army in 1864. My many years of researching had simply drawn a blank for that time period. I couldn't figure out where he had gone.

Some time back I ran across an old note I'd made that said, "Check NUCMC for JSD." NUCMC stands for National Union Catalog Manuscript Collection, a division of the Library of Congress that makes the catalog entries for archival and manuscript collections from eligible libraries nationwide searchable in one single catalog.

At the time I made the note, the only way a person could use NUCMC was through a university library computer, and I was much too timid to march into such a place. Since I assumed none of my ancestors were important enough to appear in a manuscript, I just filed the note and forgot about it.

The note surfaced again not too long ago. Now, armed with a computer, I ran a Google search and found the NUCMC website. I read the instructions carefully, but I couldn't understand how to use it. I went to the reference

desk of my city library and asked the librarian to teach me how to access NUCMC on the Internet, which he did. Then I went home, entered DOBBINS, and nearly had a heart attack when I saw James S. Dobbins listed as the author of an 1886 manuscript titled "Mining, stock-raising and Indian adventures in Colorado." The notes field for the manuscript read, "one of John Brown's partisans in Kansas, 1856; with Lane's 11th Kansas Volunteers in the Civil War; to Gregory Gulch, Colorado, 1859; miner, and stock raiser."

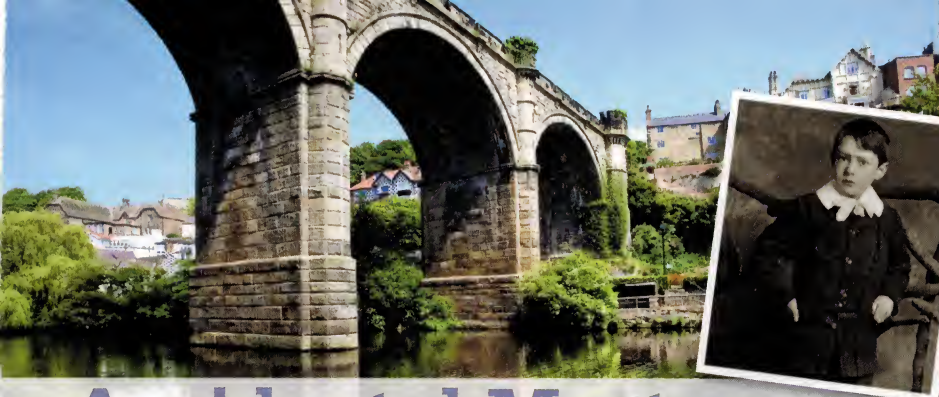
According to NUCMC, the manuscript was held by the Bancroft Library at Cal Berkeley, in my own state of California. I ordered it, and within a week I had a copy of my great-grandfather's words in my hands.

This reminded me of four very important research strategies:

- ▶ Don't assume your ancestor wasn't important enough to be documented in something that sounds highfalutin.
- ▶ Don't be afraid to ask for help from your librarians; they are there to help you.
- ▶ Review your notes periodically; you never know what will ring a bell this time around.
- ▶ Do your research sooner rather than later; your brilliant idea may be forgotten if you wait.

Now be brave and have a go at it yourself.  
<[www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/oclcsearch.html](http://www.loc.gov/coll/nucmc/oclcsearch.html)>





# Accidental Mystery

BY ECHO KING, AG

I HAVE THE DEATH CERTIFICATE for my great-great-grandfather's brother, Robert Spencer, who died at age 10 in Yorkshire, England. Under the cause of death it reads, "Drowning in Forebay of Barugh Mill, probably from accident. Found dead."

The informant on the certificate is Thomas Taylor, coroner, and there is the indication that an inquest was held. I knew Robert's father had died a few weeks before this accident and his mother several years earlier. But that was all I knew about the family.

I wrote to the county record office to see if there was a coroner's inquest. They said they didn't have any official records, but they had a notebook from Thomas Taylor, if I was interested. I requested a copy. Four sheets of stained notebook paper containing interviews with five separate people gave me better insight into Robert's family.

Around five o'clock on Saturday, 28 August, Thomas Heaps and Robert Spencer, half brothers, walked into town to pick up a pair of boots for Robert. Before completing their task, they parted ways at a railway bridge. An hour later, Robert was seen walking along a stone wall. When nine o'clock came and Robert still hadn't returned home, his family started to look for him. His body was found in a pond Sunday morning.

Beyond the bare facts, the interviews mention half siblings, a stepmother, living arrangements, and possible friends. For me, the inquiry into Robert's death—part mystery, part Dickens novel—brought one boy's story to life and opened a window into the small Yorkshire village. It also acted as a reminder of why I love family history and the how it connects us to our real and human past.



## About Coroner's Inquests

- ▶ Look for a coroner's inquest only in cases involving untimely death.
- ▶ Many coroner's inquests didn't survive, but area newspapers may indicate whether or not one was performed.
- ▶ It never hurts to ask: check for inquests at the county level—that's

where many records of this type are held.

- ▶ Read a coroner's inquest carefully. Odds are good you'll get more information than you bargained for. But be prepared—it won't necessarily be cheery.

## Reading and Writing

**TROUBLING TERMS?** MAYBE it's just that we don't write things today like we used to. Try the following tips for getting through handwriting that's not like today's simpler script:

**READ.** When the handwriting is a barrier, familiarize yourself with other handwritten documents from the same time period, especially if you already know what those documents say.

**SPEAK.** Say the word or name aloud. Does it sound right? Try it again in several other ways and variations.

**LOOK.** Letters can be deceiving: an old-fashioned J could really be an S, an I, a T ... or any of a number of other letters. If you're looking at a census record, inspect other names on the page to see if that J matches other known Js.

**WRITE.** Practice writing words in old-fashioned script. Once you get the hang of it, you'll see that those old letters aren't so cumbersome after all.

**LEARN.** A number of Internet sites teach paleography—the art of deciphering old handwriting—for free. Try <[www.ScottishHandwriting.com](http://www.ScottishHandwriting.com)> to make sense of your Scottish docs; <[www.NationalArchives.gov.uk/palaeography](http://www.NationalArchives.gov.uk/palaeography)> to make sense of your UK ones.



## TO DO:

### Celebration Asian Style

Marlborough, MA  
8 March & 12 April

Want to teach the next generation more about Asian heritage? Wide Horizons for Children is hosting a China Culture Camp in March and Korean Culture Camp in April. Everyone—whether in kindergarten or way beyond school years—is welcome. Workshops are geared for ages including children, teens, and adults. Camps include an authentic lunch, cultural marketplace, and silent auction.

<[www.whfc.org/events](http://www.whfc.org/events)>

### Who's the Man by the Apple Tree?

Tucson, AZ  
15 March

Who's in that photo? For everyone who has ever inherited a family photo lacking identifying information, *Ancestry Magazine* columnist Colleen Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., is ready to help. She'll be on hand at the Arizona State Genealogical Society's photo dating and identification workshop. Bring your pictures and get ready to look for clues.

<[www.rootsweb.com/~asgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~asgs)>

### Technological Toasts to Your Family History

Virginia Beach, VA  
29 March  
Topeka, KA  
26 April

You know her from *Found!* (page 46), now learn more from her in person as *Ancestry Magazine's* Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak talks to the Virginia Beach Genealogical Society and the Topeka Genealogical Society at their 2008 annual conferences. See conference schedules for more information.

<[www.rootsweb.com/~vavbgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~vavbgs)>

<[www.tgstopeka.org](http://www.tgstopeka.org)>

### Grandpa Served in WWI, So Why Can't I Find His Records?

Oklahoma City, OK  
5 April

You heard Grandpa's stories about his time in the war ... but why can't you find his military record? Learn how to find military records as Craig Roberts Scott shares the ins and outs and his own brand of expertise in finding military records at the Oklahoma Genealogical Society's spring seminar. Topics range from Revolutionary War records to pensions.

<[www.okgensoc.org](http://www.okgensoc.org)>

## MARCH

SUNDAY

MONDAY

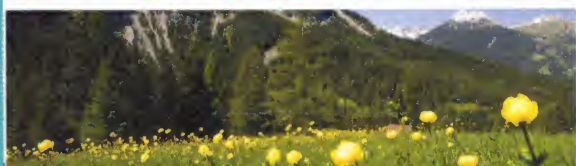
TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



**9 New York, NY**  
Mexico & Central America Tour at American Museum of Natural History  
[www.92Y.org](http://www.92Y.org)

**16 St. Paul, MN**  
Irish Heritage at the Hill House (15 Mar–16 Mar)  
[www.mnhs.org](http://www.mnhs.org)

**23**  
**30 Whitetop, VA**  
Whitetop Mountain Maple Festival (29 Mar–30 Mar)  
[www.virginia.org](http://www.virginia.org)

3

**10 Terra Haute, IN**  
Emigration, Migration and Immigration Program  
[www.inwvgs.org](http://www.inwvgs.org)

17

**24 Columbus, MS**  
Antebellum Homes and Gardens Tour (24 Mar–5 Apr)  
[www.historic-columbus.org](http://www.historic-columbus.org)

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**5 Kokomo, IN**  
8-Week Beginner Genealogy Class "Climbing Your Family Tree"  
[www.kokomo.lib.in.us](http://www.kokomo.lib.in.us)

**12 Boston, MA**  
Traditional Building Exhibit and Conference (12 Mar–15 Mar)  
[www.traditionalbuildingshow.com](http://www.traditionalbuildingshow.com)

**19 Atlanta, GA**  
32nd Annual National Council for Black Studies Conference (19 Mar–22 Mar)  
[www.ncbsonline.org](http://www.ncbsonline.org)

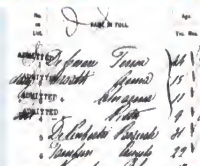
**26 Charleston, SC**  
Ending the International Slave Trade: An Inquiry (26 Mar–29 Mar)  
[www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld](http://www.cofc.edu/atlanticworld)

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**13 Phoenix, AZ**  
Festival of the West (13 Mar–16 Mar)  
[www.festivalofthewest.com](http://www.festivalofthewest.com)



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**14 Provo, UT**  
Computerized Family History (14 Mar–15 Mar)  
[www.ce.byu.edu/cw/cwcompu](http://www.ce.byu.edu/cw/cwcompu)

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**28 Ottawa, CAN**  
Gene-O-Rama 2008 (28 Mar–29 Mar)  
[www.ogsottawa.on.ca/geneorama](http://www.ogsottawa.on.ca/geneorama)

**1 Athens, GA**  
Coming to America: passenger records—arrivals and naturalizations  
[www.gagensociety.org](http://www.gagensociety.org)

**8 Henderson, NV**  
Spring Family History Seminar with Dr. Stephen Morse  
[www.rootsweb.com/~nvccngs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~nvccngs)

**15 Fargo, ND**  
Celtic Festival  
[www.ndtourism.com/whatdo/events](http://www.ndtourism.com/whatdo/events)

**22 Logan, UT**  
Genealogy and Family Heritage Jamboree  
[www.myancestorsfound.com](http://www.myancestorsfound.com)

**29 Tucson, AZ**  
Evergreen Cemetery Tour  
[www.rootsweb.com/~asgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~asgs)



## Bienvenido a Miami

Miami, FL

16 March

Escape the bitter cold of winter and celebrate America's Latino culture this March in Miami at the annual Calle Ocho street festival. The largest festival of its kind in the United States gives everyone a taste of the influences from our closest neighbors to the south.

Part of the larger 10-day Carnaval Miami celebration, both events—as well as a host of associated activities—treat revelers to fantastic food (tamales, arepas, or pinchos anyone?), music, history, culture, shopping, and more. Expect events for adults and kids, and expect plenty of other people: while hosts of the first Carnaval Miami in 1978 anticipated only 10,000 people, more than 100,000 showed up. Today, organizers of both Carnaval Miami and Calle Ocho are a bit more prepared. Good thing, since more than 1 million people will be in attendance.

<[www.carnavalmiami.com/calle8](http://www.carnavalmiami.com/calle8)>



## April

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	<b>4 Huntington Park, CA</b> Carnaval Primavera (4 Apr–6 Apr) <a href="http://www.festivalsandevents.com">www.festivalsandevents.com</a>	<b>5 Evansville, IN</b> Indiana Genealogical Society Annual Conference <a href="http://www.indgensoc.org">www.indgensoc.org</a>
<b>6 Berkeley, CA</b> Berkeley Historical Society 30th Anniversary <a href="http://www.berkeleyheritage.com/calendar.html">www.berkeleyheritage.com/calendar.html</a>	7	<b>8 Comfrey, MN</b> Prairie History Day for Homeschoolers <a href="http://www.mnhs.org">www.mnhs.org</a>		<b>10 Philadelphia, PA</b> Atlantic Emancipations Conference (10 Apr–12 Apr) <a href="http://www.librarycompany.org">www.librarycompany.org</a>	<b>11 Seattle, WA</b> 2008 Czechoslovak Genealogical Society symposium (11 Mar–12 Mar) <a href="http://www.cgsi.org">www.cgsi.org</a>	12
<b>13 Richmond, VA</b> VCU Intercultural Festival <a href="http://www.vcuicf.org">www.vcuicf.org</a>	14		16	<b>17 Cincinnati, OH</b> Ohio Genealogical Society Conference (17 Apr–19 Apr) <a href="http://www.ogs.org">www.ogs.org</a>	<b>18 San Francisco, CA</b> Naturalization Records Workshop <a href="http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/events">www.archives.gov/genealogy/events</a>	<b>19 Anchorage, AK</b> Anchorage Genealogical Society Family History Seminar <a href="http://www.anchoragegenealogy.org">www.anchoragegenealogy.org</a>
<b>20 Seattle, WA</b> Cherry Blossom & Japanese Cultural Festival <a href="http://www.seattle-downtown.com/events">www.seattle-downtown.com/events</a>		22	23	24	<b>25 New Orleans, LA</b> New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival (25 Apr–4 May) <a href="http://www.nojazzfest.com">www.nojazzfest.com</a>	<b>26 Clinton, SC</b> Living History Festival (26 Apr–27 Apr) <a href="http://www.discoverouthcarolina.com/products/10003186.aspx">www.discoverouthcarolina.com/products/10003186.aspx</a>
		29	30			

Submit your heritage event at <[www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit](http://www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit)>.





## The Health of Our Future ...

THERE'S SOMETHING VERY wrong with the Chippewas of the Aamiwnaang First Nation community near Sarnia, Ontario, Canada. They're giving birth to more girls than boys—way more. “They had enough girls for three baseball teams,” Jim Brophy, Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers director told a reporter with MSN Health, “but not enough boys for even one boy team.”

They're not alone. A similar situation is

happening in villages near the Arctic Circle and, to a far lesser degree, around the world. The reason? A number of researchers are pointing to hazardous chemicals in food supplies and the air we breathe, although exactly how these chemicals, including dioxin, DDT, and others, are affecting birth rates so drastically, no one knows for sure. Other researchers, however, don't necessarily agree, noting instead that advanced maternal and paternal ages could be the real culprit.

## And Our Past

Can Grandpa's lifestyle affect your grandchildren? According to epigenetics—a field of science that looks at how outside factors influence the DNA we pass on—the answer is a resounding yes. For proof, scientists turn to a study in a small, Swedish town in which it was discovered that grandfathers who experienced famine at key points in their childhood had grandsons who lived long, healthy lives, while grandfathers whose childhoods were well fed had grandsons who were more likely to develop diabetes. Other research linking environment to DNA includes a 2006 study of the stress hormone cortisone in the bloodstream of children born to women who were pregnant during the events of 9/11 and a 2007 study that has linked epigenetics to male infertility.

## Thanks Mom and Dad

WHEN MR. AND MRS. GEORGE Fry sailed to America in the 1630s, one of them carried a stowaway—a genetic predisposition for colon cancer. After 14 years of research that included combing the Utah Population Database and FamilySearch.org, researchers at the Huntsman Cancer Institute concluded the Frys are the source of a “founder mutation” in the adenomatous polyposis coli (APC) gene. While this mutation can increase a person's risk of developing colon cancer to more than 2 in 3 compared to

1 in 24 for the general population, for the Frys' descendants, the news isn't as bad as it sounds. Family members still have only a 1 in 8,000 chance of inheriting the mutation. With early intervention, says lead researcher Dr. Deborah Neklason, the cancer risk “goes to near nothing.”



## Solutions, Solutions, Solutions

GOT A FAMILY HISTORY research problem you just can't work out? Visit the new Learning Center tab at Ancestry.com. You'll find videos, how-to's, and a whole slew of articles tackling almost any problem your family tree can dish out.

•[HTTP://LEARN.ANCESTRY.COM](http://learn.ancestry.com)•





## To Get It in Writing

BY LISA MCCOLE

EVERY ST. PATRICK'S DAY, my mom, Alice Caswell, would make Irish soda bread from her Aunt Eily Grimes's recipe. When Mom was a child, Eily would come over to visit and bring this bread. Years later, Mom asked for the recipe. Eily, a large woman, said it was four handfuls of flour, a pinch of this, and a scoop of that. Mom wrote this down and went home to make it. It was a flop.

My Aunt Honey (Margaret Hermann) then invited Eily over and had all the ingredients ready. Eily walked into Aunt Honey's kitchen,

tore the tablecloth off the table, and dumped flour in a heap on the table. No bowl needed for this recipe. As Eily started to use an ingredient, Honey took it and measured it before giving it back to Eily. This is how we can now enjoy this family recipe today. It is great bread any time of the year, especially when warm and covered with butter.

Have a heritage recipe you want to see in *Ancestry Magazine*? Submit it at [www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit](http://www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit). Published recipes earn \$100.

### Eily's Irish Soda Bread

- 4 good cups of flour
- 3 heaping teaspoons of baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ to full box caraway seeds
- ¾ to full box raisins
- 2 to 2 ¼ cups buttermilk

Mix all ingredients and knead with plenty of flour and a little more for good measure. Cut mixture in half, form two blobs, and put in pie tins. Slash a cross on top of each loaf and put in oven at 375 degrees for 30 to 45 minutes.

Remove bread from plate, wrap in dish towel, and stand on end to cool. Good luck.





## Getting to Know Them

Ever feel like you really want to get to know an ancestor but there is just too much stuff cluttering up your relationship? Whether that "stuff" is a scattered collection of hard facts about a person's life, the proclivities of a generation long gone, or a stack of paper sitting on your floor, take a little time this spring to get focused—and organized—with the following ideas:



### Life and Times

Not everyone's life mirrored the history books. When it's the details you're hoping to dive into, one of the following ideas might give you inspiration:

#### rites of passage

Feeling stymied by the roadblocks on your hero's journey? Rites of Passage is a nonprofit organization that has created modern-day treks based on the universal elements of Native American and other traditional cultures' rites of passage. Your nine-day rite of passage includes a three-day solo in the wilderness, with plenty of prep time beforehand and plenty of time afterwards for understanding and applying your experience.

**rites of passage \$1,095 (NINE-DAY PROGRAM)**  
[RITESOFPASSAGEVISIONQUEST.ORG](http://RITESOFPASSAGEVISIONQUEST.ORG)

#### picture them

Tattooing goes back at least to Ötzi the Iceman (circa 3300 BC), who sported 57 "tats," some thought to have been performed for therapeutic purposes. The traditional pe'a, the tattooing of the thighs and midsection, marked an important male rite of passage in Samoa, and some Crusaders were said to have had a Jerusalem cross tattooed on their bodies to insure a Christian burial. You can learn more about the symbolism of tattoos past in *The Tattoo History Source Book* by Steve Gilbert. Or test drive one of your own from TattooJohnny.com, where you can take your favorite design—maybe even something retro—from printer to arm for a trial run.

**THE TATTOO HISTORY SOURCE BOOK \$29.99**  
 BY STEVE GILBERT (POWERHOUSE BOOKS, 2001)  
[WWW.POWERHOUSEBOOKS.COM](http://WWW.POWERHOUSEBOOKS.COM)

**TRIAL RUN TATTOO \$3.89**  
[WWW.TATTOOJOHNNY.COM](http://WWW.TATTOOJOHNNY.COM)



## Recording Their Every Move

Is it the not-so-average details that have you down? Teach your *Family Tree Maker* 2008 new tricks with these add-ons, storage solutions, and some little known how-to:



#### show all

You've spent years creating the perfect family history. So, how can you share it with others? *Charting Companion* lets you take your *Family Tree Maker* file and quickly create beautiful, customized ancestral charts in a variety of formats and millions of colors. Print them out, post them on the Web, or send them through e-mail with the click of a mouse.

**CHARTING COMPANION 2.0 FOR FAMILY TREE MAKER \$24.95 (CD OR DOWNLOAD)**  
[WWW.PROGENYGENEALOGY.COM/CHARTINGCOMPANION.HTML](http://WWW.PROGENYGENEALOGY.COM/CHARTINGCOMPANION.HTML)

#### beyond average

How can you enter multiword surnames in *Family Tree Maker*? Adopted children? Multiple spouses? With quick, easy-to-understand topics, you'll learn tips for those not-so-run-of-the-mill discoveries you made about the residents of your family tree so you can make *Family Tree Maker* 2008 work for you.

**THE FAMILY TREE MAKER 2008 LITTLE BOOK OF ANSWERS \$9.95**  
[HTTP://STORE.ANCESTRY.COM/PRODUCTDETAIL.ASPX?P=MFSKU4540](http://STORE.ANCESTRY.COM/PRODUCTDETAIL.ASPX?P=MFSKU4540)

The Family Tree Maker 2008

**Little Book of Answers**

Tips, Tools, and Extras



## SAFE KEEPING

It only takes a moment to lose your family history forever. Protect your *Family Tree Maker* files now by backing them up online. Websites including XDrive, Box.net, and MediaMax offer storage space—for free. You'll have plenty of room to save your files, photos, and even family videos.

### ONLINE STORAGE FREE

• [WWW.XDRIVE.COM](http://WWW.XDRIVE.COM) •

• [WWW.BOX.NET](http://WWW.BOX.NET) •

• [WWW.MEDIAMAX.COM](http://WWW.MEDIAMAX.COM) •



## Out with the Old

Motivated to spruce up your hands-on style? Whether it's removing winter's clutter or finding a way to take cleaner photos, there's an answer for every problem out there—and some problems that you may not have even known you had:



### LITTLE BLACK BOOKS AND BIG BLACK BOOKS

When was the last time you took a good look at your address book—the paper one, not the one on your computer? If your middle-aged friends still have college addresses, telephone exchanges are shown with letters (MA2-6107 anyone?), or state abbreviations that aren't quite the standard two-letter style, maybe it's time for something new. Consider the Moleskine Large Address Book with 240 pages, a storage pocket, elastic closure, laminated index tabs, acid-free paper, and a plain black cover. Simple and classic, this book is perfectly portable and there whenever you need it—even if the power goes out.

**MOLESKINE LARGE ADDRESS BOOK \$24.95**  
[WWW.MOLESKINE.COM](http://WWW.MOLESKINE.COM)

### MOVE THE MAGAZINES

Holding onto every magazine that comes into your house? No one here would fault you, but if your best storage solution is to stack them on the floor, try something a bit more accessible. Most office supply stores feature cardboard or plastic vertical magazine storage options, and a few, like Office Depot, go a greener route, with recycled plastic holders in a selection of styles and sizes. Your magazines can claim a smaller space on your bookshelf, leaving your floor open for bigger, more awkward finds.



**RECYCLED PLASTIC MAGAZINE FILE \$5.69**  
[WWW.OFFICEDEPOT.COM](http://WWW.OFFICEDEPOT.COM)



### ODD SIZES

Not every family history keepsake is of the paper variety. Protect the heirloom wedding dress, quilt, or baby blanket in an archival garment box. Acid-free construction with rigid sides, boxes are built to hold almost any type of clothing or textile—from baby shoes to hoop skirts.

**ARCHIVAL GARMENT STORAGE BOXES PRICES VARY**  
[WWW.CONTAINERSTORE.COM](http://WWW.CONTAINERSTORE.COM)

### SPRUCE UP THE NEW

It's not always about the old in family history. When you're serious about getting the cleanest, purest shot, make sure your camera lens is spotless. Try a digital sensor cleaner, like the Firefly. Through deionization, the Firefly gets rid of most of the particles that can stick to your lens: pollen, dust, and other weird stuff. Too techy? Maybe the lower-tech LensPen, featuring a cleaning element on one end and a brush on the other, is right for you.

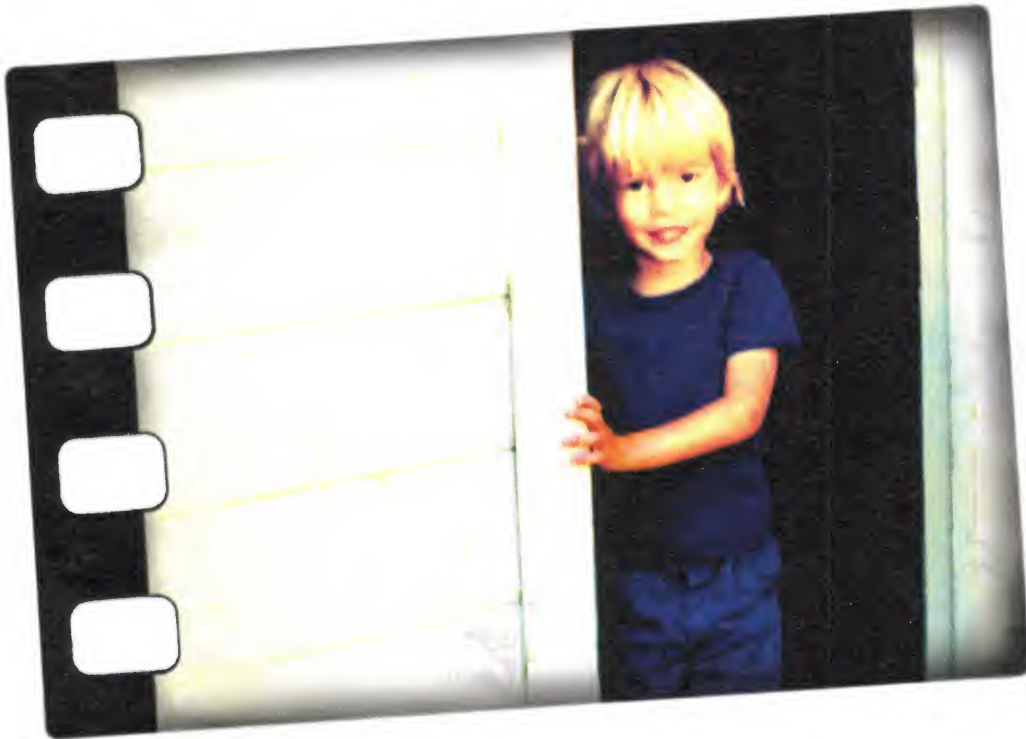
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<http://www.myfamily.com/ancestry>







# Are You an heir?

BY DARA BLANCHETTE

FORGET THOSE WINNING European lottery announcements that keep filling up your inbox and the dreams of a jumbo prize check coming to your door. You could be next in line to score a real prize—and you might not even know it.

So who would know? An heir tracer—a genealogist assigned to find out just who is entitled to an unclaimed estate.

“When an estate goes into probate with no designated administrator it will eventually go to the state,” says ProGenealogists Inc.’s Kory Meyerink. Oftentimes, a genealogist is hired, usually by an independent heir-tracing firm, to determine who the estate’s beneficiary would be.

Heir research, closely related to forensic genealogy, usually involves two parts: locating unknown or missing heirs and analyzing information for court, says Kathleen Hinckley, a certified genealogist and private investigator.

Researching heirs is a competitive field, one that Hinckley says isn’t easy to just

step into. And it’s hard work. A researcher needs to develop worldwide contacts and a library of resources. Even the silver lining of telling someone he or she is about to inherit a bundle has a cloud: indirectly telling someone a relative has died.

So what do you do when someone tells you that you may be the heir to a fortune? Hinckley recommends starting by verifying that the claim is legitimate. Ask for references. Then do a little of your own research: check with professional organizations like the Association of Professional Genealogists or the Board for Certification of Professional Genealogists to see if you can find information about the people who found you. And remember, a simple Google search—for more information about the estate, the researcher, or the organization contacting you about the claim—can always be enlightening.





## Neo/Geo/ Genealogy

STOPPING AT THE PORT of immigration, the family homestead, a cemetery, or Dad's old high school? Try one of the following photo + GPS approaches to take your family history travels high-tech. You and your whole family will end up with an easy place to find the exact locations and advice about the family hot spots to visit.

### Blog It

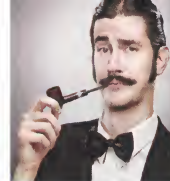
Take a photo and jot down your GPS coordinates. Then upload your photos to a simple family blog (sign up for a free one at <[www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)>, <[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)>, or any number of other sites). Tag posts with location, family name, and stories—yours or the ones you've inherited and invite other family members to visit the blog and do the same.

### Map It

Using a photo-sharing site like Flickr or Picasa, upload your photos with GPS coordinates and tagged with family names. Invite family members to participate by adding their own photos and unique locations. Then use the sites' maps to illustrate exactly where the family spots are—click on any one and you'll get photos, GPS coordinates, and more information.

## Money

BY KATHRYN PEPPER



**MONEY ON YOUR MIND?** You're not the only one. When you're looking for an old will or clues to a financially solvent family tree, be sure to check Ancestry.com. You'll find a list of them at the Court, Land, Wills, and Financial Records tab. Or go to the Ancestry Database Card Catalog (to get there, select the Search tab from Ancestry.com and then select Card Catalog—it's the top link on the right side of the screen) and jump directly into one of the following collections. You may just find the windfall you're looking for.

Australia—Convict Savings Bank Books, 1824–1886

New York Emigrant Savings Bank, 1850–1883

Maryland Calendar of Wills

New York City Wills, 1665–1707

New York City Wills, 1771–1776

Early California Wills

Muster and Pay Rolls of the War of the Revolution

History of Taxation in Connecticut, 1636–1776

A Century of Banking in New York, 1822–1922

Men and Money: The Urban Frontier at Green Bay, 1815–1840

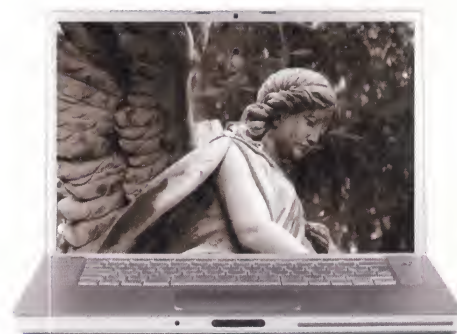
The Rich Men of Massachusetts

The Wealthy Men and Women of Brooklyn and Williamsburgh

Where to Emigrate and Why: Homes and Fortunes in the Boundless

West and the Sunny South

## Stay in Touch Anywhere. Even Six Feet Under.



**THINK IT'S CONVENIENT** to plug in at your local coffee shop? How about at the cemetery?

That's the treatment visitors to the Oak Grove Cemetery in Paducah, Kentucky, are getting with the cemetery's latest addition—Wi-Fi. Visitors who stop by with wireless-enabled laptops can not only view the tombstones of departed loved ones—they can hop on the Internet to record the details in an online family tree, post photos as they take them, or even search records at Ancestry.com to determine once and for all if the occupant of the next grave over is an uncle or just a friend.





## The Really Big Picture

BY COLLEEN FITZPATRICK, PH.D.

WE OFTEN LOOK SO CLOSELY at a photo trying to figure out where it was taken, when it was taken, or who is in it that we lose sight of the big picture—the story behind the photo.

Unfortunately, only a small part of that story is ever handed down to us, and often we get no story at all. Wouldn't it be great to discover the bigger picture behind the photo?

This photo was sent to us by Tom Tullis, a fan of our weekly photoquizzes at <[www.forensicgenealogy.info](http://www.forensicgenealogy.info)>. As part of the quizzes, pictures are posted and readers have to sleuth out the story behind the photo.

Tom told us that this was a picture of his dad and asked us to puzzle out when and where the photo was taken. Thanks to a few clues from Tom and a little detective work, we did a pretty good job.

Tom's dad is holding an issue of the *Commercial Appeal*, which we discovered was published in Memphis, Tennessee. In the distance, a tugboat is pushing a barge carrying a large cylindrical cargo. We figured Tom's dad must be sitting on the bank of the Mississippi River because it passes by Memphis and is one of the few U.S. rivers navigable by barge.

The *Commercial Appeal's* headline reads "Soviet Alive Well into 17th Orbit." A Google search told us that the headline refers to cosmonaut Gherman Titov, who made 17 orbits of the earth on 7 August 1961. A comparison of the photo in the newspaper with a picture of Titov confirmed this.

Tom told us that the barge's cargo was part of the big picture. What was going on in Memphis that day? Was there something interesting happening on the river? Here's what we found out.

On 5 August 1961, NASA began transport of the booster stage of the Saturn V rocket from Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, in preparation for assembling and testing the first flight vehicle at Cape Canaveral later in the year.

Tom later explained, "My dad heard that something important related to the U.S. space program was going to be coming down the Mississippi River on a barge on this date. Since he worked at the Medical Center in Memphis not that far away, he went down to the river at lunchtime. While there, he was approached by a photographer for the *Commercial Appeal* asking if he could take his picture holding the newspaper with the barge in the background. At the time, I don't think they knew exactly what was on the barge or what it was going to be used for, only that it was related to the U.S. space program."

The photo of Tom's dad was taken on 7 August 1961 as the booster stage of the Saturn V rocket, transported by the barge *Compromise*, was passing Memphis on its way to Cape Canaveral. The exact time was 3:10 p.m. We didn't contact NASA to obtain that information. We looked at Tom's father's watch. He must have taken a late lunch that day.





### Treasure in the Eyes of the Beholder

It's not always the lure of fame and profit that drives treasure hunters; it's the thrill of the find—any find, no matter how trivial. Federation of Metal Detector and Archaeological Clubs' Mike Smith says when he searched his own mother's house he didn't find anything valuable to anyone else, but did find small pieces of memorabilia and a medal for a track meet dating from 1929. Smith tried to find the owner but to no avail.

With a rented metal detector, homeowner Debi Mitchell found plow points and other bits of iron that her mother had planted over the years to enrich her garden—she was delighted by these tangible reminders of her mother.

Treasure-hunting expert Michael Chaplan thinks most people are particularly happy with anything they find that provides an emotional connection to the past. "Finding an old letter or valentine, that's a very real connection with your ancestors," he says, "and that in itself is a great reward."



# FOUND *money*

*So you heard the rumors about Grandpa burying his cash in the backyard, too? Before you start digging, find out why he did it and whether those tales of long-missing fortunes ever do become true stories.*

BY KELLY BURGESS

EVERYONE HAS OPENED UP the washing machine and found dollar bills tangled in the socks or removed a couch cushion to hit a jackpot of lost quarters. Imagine, though, if your entire house was hiding a fortune just waiting to be found.

Recently, big monetary finds made news in Massachusetts, where old bills were reportedly discovered in a hole in the ground (see “About That Find in Massachusetts,” page 26), and in Pennsylvania, where bags full of old coins were discovered hidden in the walls. In both cases, the original owners were said to have been people who wouldn’t trust their hard-earned pay to a bank.

Think the deed to your own family’s homestead would read like a treasure map? You might be wrong—finding someone’s Mason jars full of treasure is a relatively uncommon occurrence. More likely, the treasure is the family rumor of stashed cash.

But for a lucky few, tales of gold really do pan out.

## Not Banking on Banks

Hiding money around the house was a long-established tradition for Debi Mitchell’s family. Debi, who currently resides in North Carolina, remembers her great-grandfather hiding money all over the yard. It wasn’t that he didn’t trust banks; it was that he had something bigger to hide.

“My great-grandfather was a bootlegger,” says Debi. “He did not believe in banks because he knew if he put the money in the bank, people would question where he got it.”

Mitchell’s grandfather and father continued in the

family business and also continued to bank in what they jokingly called the “Ditch Bank.”

Even after Mitchell’s father, G.W. Woolard, Jr., moved on to a more traditional career path, he never quite got out of his hiding habit. Eventually, suffering from dementia, G.W. called his daughter, frantic because he’d lost his money map. That was when Debi convinced her father that it was time to dig up the Mason jars and do something else with the money. At the time, though, she was living elsewhere and never really knew if he followed her advice. So, when she and her husband, Alan, moved to the old homestead it was in the back of her mind, especially when they landscaped the backyard.

“By the time we started working on the yard we were pretty sure Dad had put all his cash in the bank, but when we were digging up this one place, the shovel hit something and I thought to myself, ‘Wow! He really did it!’ Unfortunately, it was just an empty jar. He must have taken the money out and tossed it back in the hole.”

For Linda Ruttschaw’s great-grandfather, William Strawser, it was a deep distrust of banks that led him to hide money in some unusual places around his Meeker, Ohio, farmhouse.

“When I was seven, he showed me my first hiding place, the fish bowl in the parlor,” says Linda. “He had me reach in, and sure enough under the gravel were silver half dollars. I remember they were Walking Liberty ones.”

Great-Grandpa William had good reason to bury his money in the fishbowl: he was a farmer who lost everything when the local bank went under during the Great Depression. Linda has vivid memories of him warning her





## Continue the Search:

- **Inflation Station:** So your great uncle Marvin spent 6K on his first house? Use the inflation calculator at <[www.westegg.com/inflation](http://www.westegg.com/inflation)> to see what that would cost you today.
- **Currency Culture:** Find out what your ancestors' nations valued. Check out these sites to see actual images of current and historical currencies: <[www.frb.org/currency/index.html](http://www.frb.org/currency/index.html)>, <[www.mintsoftheworld.com/index.html](http://www.mintsoftheworld.com/index.html)>, or even check eBay.

## The other side of the coin:

Standardized money may have developed from a need to satisfy the coincidence of wants, but it functions in other ways too. Says British Museum curator Catherine Eagleton, "Money is a photograph of history, it tells a story, it reflects an identity."

"My favorite piece right now is actually rather ordinary. It's a [one penny coin—Britain's smallest] from 1903. A bit worn, made of copper. But there's something extraordinary about it. Someone had stamped across the head of the king 'Vote for Women.' It was a way of getting the message out [during the Women's Suffrage Movement]. The government couldn't go pick out every 1p coin, so women were able to raise awareness [by printing their message on money]. I love things like that—coins that have a story to tell. There are bigger subjects, bigger stories and issues."

not to ever trust a bank because it would take her money.

After William's death in 1954, the farm was sold to a developer. Linda thinks her surviving family got all the hidden cash, but what she really speculates about is just how much some of those coins, like the Walking Liberty half dollars, would be worth today.

## Is Old Money Always Big Money?

So if Linda found that fishbowl full of coins, would she be set for life? Not necessarily. According to Claudia Dickens at the Bureau of Engraving and Printing (BEP), the official worth of those half dollars is exactly what they were when little Linda first stuck her hand in the fishbowl 54 years ago—50 cents.

"The BEP does not recognize increased value because of age," says Dickens. "Whether it's paper or coin, as far as the Treasury is concerned it's just face value. If it's very old it may not be recognizable to a teller in a modern financial institution, but anyone can send that old note to the BEP to redeem it, and the BEP can send the person a check for face value."

Professional numismatists, or experts on money, are likely to agree.

Douglas Mudd, curator of the American Numismatic Association Money Museum and author of *All the Money in the World: The Art and History of Paper Money and Coins from Antiquity to the 21st Century*, says stories of people finding money in attics or in other hiding places around old houses is becoming less and







## Hunting for Treasure

After Debi Mitchell and her husband moved into her family's farmhouse, they decided to rent a metal detector to see if they could find any of her father's buried coins. They didn't unearth anything. But, says Michael Chaplan, author of *The Urban Treasure Hunter, a Practical Handbook for Beginners*, it was a very good move and something he would recommend.

While Chaplan relies on history and research for most of his treasure hunting, if you're looking for treasure around the old homestead, he suggests taking the advice of Sherlock Holmes: don't overlook the obvious.

"Knock on walls and look for hollows, check for compartments under stairways and lift stairs to see what's there," says Chaplan. "Also, look out the window and take note of any landmarks, such as large rocks, trees, walls, or fences. People like to hide things where they are able to see them, but they need landmarks to help them find the item again."

In his 20 years as a treasure hunter, the most important thing Chaplan has learned is how to keep his mouth shut. Money brings out the worst in people, and those who advertise found treasure are apt

to be sorry. Even if the cache is found on your property, you can possibly leave yourself open to previous owners trying to stake a claim and tying the find up in court for years. Worse, Chaplan has heard story upon story of treasure hunters, or lucky people who stumbled upon treasure, who let their finds be known and then were robbed. He can also recount anecdotes of contractors who found caches of valuables in homes they were hired to renovate. As long as they keep their mouths shut, they can sell anything they find to a private collector and no one is the wiser. Lesson learned? Keep a close eye on anyone you hire to renovate your home.

Mike Smith, western chapter president for the Federation of Metal Detector and Archaeological Clubs, also points out that many states have laws governing recovered artifacts, even if those artifacts are recovered on your own property. Often the laws are vague about exactly what constitutes an artifact, and it can turn into a legal headache. Smith suggests investigating local laws—and thinking about the consequences—before notifying the media.





## Financial Movements

3100 BC — Arguably the most important invention of all time—writing—begins out of a need to keep accounts—and probably cook the books.

390 BC — When the Romans are attacked, cackling geese warn defenders before attackers can make it to the city's reserves. The Romans build a shrine to Moneta—the goddess of warning—where the words “money” and “mint” come from.

30 BC–14 AD — You can thank Augustus for that extra 8.5 percent on every purchase. Two thousand years ago, he introduces the Romans to sales tax and land tax.

1532 — Explorers begin the conquest of the Incas—the only highly civilized society to function without using money, despite vast amounts of gold and silver in their possession.

1640 — Long before you could use plastic, Charles I is using pepper. He sells the coveted seasoning (which he buys on credit) at a loss for some quick cash.

1860 — Cowrie shells in Uganda lose their value. At the turn of the century, a woman could be bought for two shells; by 1860, a woman costs 1,000.

1832 — British officials relax the punishment for forging money in Britain. What once deserved the death penalty now only calls for exile to Australia.

*Source: A History of Money: From Ancient Times to the Present Day by Glyn Davies*

less common, but his museum still fields its fair share of questions about how much found money is worth. Usually, says Mudd, there is a sense of high excitement, almost palpable anticipation, when someone inquires with the belief that they've found their fortune in Grandma's attic. Sometimes they have. But more often the find is worth far less than the caller may be hoping.

“People assume that old money is always worth a lot, and that's not always true,” says Mudd. “There are some rare pieces, but most coins and paper bills are still worth no more than their face value. Some may be worth a little more if they're in perfect condition, but if they're worn they're still just worth face value. After all, you can buy Roman coins that are 2,000 years old for a few dollars.”

## The Real Treasure in Those Walls

Dottie Bruce of Conroe, Texas, says her brother, Joseph Sauer, still dreams of the possible fortune he accidentally lost 73 years ago in the family home in Aberdeen, South Dakota. Joseph had a collection of wheat pennies in a can sitting on a shelf in the attic. The can tipped over and the pennies spilled down into a wall. The house has changed hands many times since that day, but Joseph, now 89 years old, wonders if the pennies are still there and, if so, how much they're worth now.

The truth is, probably not much. Except in extremely rare cases, most wheat pennies from that time period are worth, at most, two cents. If the family had torn up the side of the house to get at the pennies, they may have made a few dollars. Instead, when Dottie and Joseph's father died in 1963, their mother sold the house. She netted a 200 percent profit over its original purchase price. All told, that may have been the biggest windfall hiding in the house.

**KELLY BURGESS** is a freelance writer in Pennsylvania.

## About That Find in Massachusetts

Not every story that starts with good fortune ends happily ever after. Take the 2005 find in Massachusetts where a pair of friends claimed to have found a stash of old bills buried in the backyard of one of the friends.

The story was that the two men were digging up a tree when they found an old can filled with 100-year-old money. Face value wasn't bad: about \$7,000. Add a little time for the money to age appropriately, and the find was estimated to be worth more than \$100,000.

The pair started making the media rounds: television news, radio programs, newspapers, the works. But their story wasn't always quite the same. That made local police a bit suspicious.

A few weeks later, authorities alleged that the money was not discovered in a backyard but was found in an old barn where one of the friends had been working on a repair project. The pair, along with two accomplices, were arrested shortly thereafter on charges ranging from larceny to receiving stolen property. A few months later, however, charges against the men were dropped.

No word on who holds the buried treasure today.





# From Backyards to Banks

BY KELLY BURGESS

WHY DID PEOPLE BURY THEIR MONEY in the backyard? For the same reason William Strawser did: they worried that if they put their money in the bank they'd never see it again. For the treasure-hunting type, however, knowing more about the types of bills you could find buried in the backyard means knowing a bit more about the types of banking in America.

## 1600s

America's cash crunch started when Europeans arrived in America, lured by the promise of streets paved with gold. What they found was the opposite: a dire lack of precious metals on the continent. Any valuable, visible commodity to trade, like silver or gold, was in short supply. "For a country to be wealthy, it had to have real gold and silver in the country and restrict the amount of gold and silver that left," says American Numismatic Association Money Museum curator Douglas Mudd. "Other countries were aware of [America's precious-metal deficit] and tried to avoid paying for necessary goods, like trees and hemp or whatever, in gold, preferring to trade with items like slaves or sugar. This kept [America] in a perpetual shortage of actual wealth and made it difficult to issue paper money, because money has to be guaranteed by something."

## 1690

Treasury bills were the first paper money in America, and they were issued by the Massachusetts Bay Company to fund a war with the French. The money was "guaranteed" by an expected victory—defeat of the French would surely result in a booty that could back up at least the face value of the money. The victory, however, never materialized. "At first, money was issued for brief periods with the idea that it would be redeemed by a state as soon as possible," says Mudd. "As long as people were confident that the state could back up the money, it worked. If you're the farmer that means relying on the merchant to take the money, and, as the merchant, trusting that your suppliers will take the money. If at any point this system of trust breaks

down and someone won't take that money, it all starts to devalue." Soon, colonies all over America were printing money and guaranteeing it in various ways that were a gamble for anyone who took it. The money might only be good in a single colony: people couldn't take a dollar from a bank in Massachusetts and spend it in New York because there was no way for a New York merchant to know if that piece of paper was good or worthless. Fraud and counterfeiting were rampant.

## 1776

The first organized attempt by the U.S. government to issue money came during the American Revolution. This, too, ended in disaster, and the bitter phrase, "not worth a continental" was born.

## 1863

It wasn't until the Civil War that Congress created a national banking system, chartering federal banks that could issue their own paper money. The banks had to have a certain amount in reserves with the federal government, and the government would print notes that conformed to a standard design for the banks. The problem with this system was that banks were still independent entities, and they relied on the national economy to remain solvent. If a bank went out of business, as happened to many banks in the 1920s and 1930s, a depositor might lose everything.

## 1933

Finally, in 1933 when the FDIC was established, America had a banking system that citizens could trust for the first time; however, it took time to build that trust. So for anyone who lived through the years when putting money in a bank was almost as much of a gamble as betting that money on a horse, it's little wonder why a person would decide to hide his or her fortune in the attic. Or the outhouse. Or the garden. Or the fishbowl. Or all of the above.



# Salt Stones to Cyberspace

BY LISA SALAZAR

*BACK IN MY DAY*, MILK was a nickel and butter a dime... One hundred years ago, you could buy a large house for a thousand bucks. Try that today and you might be able to house a doll.

Society is constantly changing—and so is commerce. So what brought us to this point?

## The Barter Boom

Commerce started out very simply—prehistoric tribes and early societies bartered goods and services to meet their needs. You grew grains, the family next door had sheep, and the man next to them made spears. What more did you need?

Unfortunately, as societies grew, the “double coincidence of wants” became more coincidental. Sure, you need a spear to hunt, but you won’t need another for a few months. Meanwhile, your neighbor is dying for some more wheat, but he’s got nothing to trade for it—at least nothing you need.

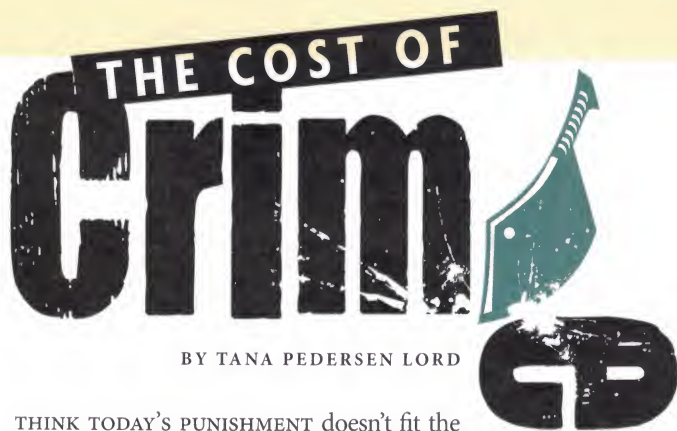
As trades became more specialized and wants more specific, bartering became inconvenient. But this wasn’t the only cause of its demise. Religious and ceremonial symbols began to rise in prominence—and value. Bartering eventually became impractical and took a backseat to more modern commerce.

## Cold, Hard Cowhide

So when did money finally come into circulation?

“It really depends on how you define ‘money,’” says Catherine Eagleton, curator of Modern Money at the British Museum and editor of *Money: A History*. “Thousands of years ago in Europe, if you have a bunch of cowhides, you can wear them, but you can also use them in exchange for other things. At what point does that cowhide become money instead of just a really valuable cowhide?”

Primitive monies came in many shapes and sizes. Eggs, feathers, iron nails, pigs, rice, salt, tools, stones, metals, and even vodka were used as



THINK TODAY’S PUNISHMENT doesn’t fit the crime? Take a look at how far (and how not-so-far) we’ve come.

## 620 BC EQUAL OPPORTUNITY CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Draco, an Athenian lawmaker, creates the first written account of Greek laws. He believes in the death penalty for all crimes—whether you murder your neighbor, steal a cabbage from the market, or are simply caught being idle. Ironically, Draco is smothered to death at a public appearance when excited fans pay tribute to him by tossing hats and other garments at him.

1760 BC

620 BC

## 1760 BC LIFE AND LIMB IN ANCIENT BABYLON

It is surprisingly easy to lose an appendage under Hammurabi’s code in the Babylonian Empire. Sons, treat elders with respect; striking your father will lead to your hand being cut off, and you’ll lose your tongue if you tell your adoptive parents that they are not your father or mother. Slaves, you are more likely to lose ears—your punishment for striking a free man or telling your master that he isn’t your master.



forms of money. By 687 BC, the Lydians fashioned the first coins. They set up the first permanent retail shops—today's equivalent of a strip mall. Greek historian Herodotus rebuked their gross commercialism. But within the next century, his own Greece began minting coins.

In the next thousand years, commerce flourished into an international affair. Mixed among achievements in exploration and printing were milestones in commerce: inflation, counterfeiting, plundering foreign monies, stealing domestic monies, debasing coinage, and legalizing interest.

After experimenting with many different money mediums—gold, silver, copper, then gold again—more and more countries began adopting paper banknotes. China had been using paper money regularly for more

than 500 years, starting after a copper shortage in the 10th century AD, but it wasn't until Italian explorer Marco Polo visited the Far East that Europe began to take notice.

People were very suspicious of those paper banknotes at first. Persia, Japan, and India were all unsuccessful at circulating the flimsy currency. In fact, Britain actually forbade American colonists from issuing paper money when some colonies (ahem, Rhode Island) recklessly over issued the tender. Ironically, it was the colonists' ability to print legal tender that ultimately funded the Revolutionary War, even if the Revolutionary War made most of those banknotes worthless.

### Promises, Promises

Despite the reluctance of select societies to move into modern

commerce (in 1910, the Kirghiz people in the Russian Empire were still using horse as their main monetary unit—with sheep and lambskin as small change), the rest of the world was moving forward in large strides. By 1890, for example, checks accounted for 90 percent of the total value of transactions in the United States.

In the mid 1900s, commerce went through plastic surgery in the form of the credit card. Originally marketed to traveling salesmen, credit cards were created by local businesses to eliminate the amount of cash they had to have on hand. The Diners Club credit card was created in 1950 for use in restaurants; within the decade, American Express and Bank of America issued their first credit cards.

### 600 EVEN BARBARIANS CARE

For the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe, even the minutia of being a responsible citizen is captured in the code of law. What happens if you set a forest on fire? 100 lashes. What if your bees escape and attack a neighbor's animals? If the animal is crippled, you'll have to replace it; if the beast is killed, you'll be on the hook for two replacements.

250 BC

### 250 BC A CIVIL TONGUE

Defamation of character isn't just a modern concept. In ancient India, mocking someone for being blind, deformed, crazy, or impotent can cost you some coin, regardless of the truth of the statement. Luckily if you're simply drunk when you slander your fellow citizens, your fine will be cut in half.

600

886

### 886 THE PRICE OF A MAN

When a man is murdered, the Vikings demand that *wergeld* (monetary reparations) be paid to the family or kinsmen of the victim.



With the advent of computer technology and the Internet, wallets seem now to be better suited to carrying cards instead of cash. You can buy groceries, pay bills, and shop for just about anything with just an Internet connection and a credit card number. And almost any store will take your credit card—often before they'll accept your check.

Commerce is evolving so quickly that, in a 2007 interview in the *Independent*, Peter Ayliffe, chief executive of Visa Europe, predicted that by 2012 Britain would be a cashless society. It's only a matter of time before other countries follow suit.

### Save the Sayonara

Will money ever become completely obsolete? Not without a fight.

Modern Money curator Eagleton sums it up like this: "People quite like cash still." There's just something

about it that makes you feel good. It often speaks louder than words. She continues, "Suppose you're in a bar, and there's a guy who pulls out a 50 pound note—he's trying to look impressive. I suppose you could use a gold card, or a platinum card, but ... money tells a lot more about a person—they like that feeling of a nice fat wallet."

Most people would agree. Having a little cash on hand makes you feel more secure, immune to the idiosyncrasies of wavering technology. Plus, cash isn't traceable. And some people might not want their purchases to be on record for future posterity.

As long as there are impressions to be made in the open and deeds to be done under the table, money's not going anywhere. But keep your eye on commerce—this evolution is far from over.

### Money Tells

Your bank statement, credit report, and social security number could give lurking thieves just what they need to steal more than your savings—your identity. But if you're in the business of tracking down identities, not stealing them, these same documents could be just what you need to trace an illusive ancestor's identity and personality. Start with anything financial you can find and then, you guessed it, work backwards. Not only could you find an address, parent or spouse name, or other contact information on a will, loan, or bank statement, but you can also get a good idea of just how ritzy your auntie was.

Where should you look? Look through old boxes for dated bank statements or tax information. Use people finder services to access more recent bankruptcy files, credit histories, and other financial records. Land transactions and probate proceedings associated with an estate can be found in county clerks' offices. And don't forget to check favorites like Ancestry.com and RootsWeb.com for some unsuspected treasures.

#### 1611 RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ANYONE?

Colonists in America take their religious beliefs quite seriously, starting with mandatory church attendance. Working, traveling, or kissing on the Sabbath can earn you a fine or an afternoon in the public stockade. More severe punishments, such as whippings and pierced tongues, are saved for those who blaspheme against God or deny the scriptures.

#### 1996 THINK BEFORE YOU SWING

A Swedish father is fined for spanking his 11-year-old child—corporal punishment was banned in Sweden in 1979.

1611

1788

1996

#### 1788 KANGAROOS AND CRIMINALS

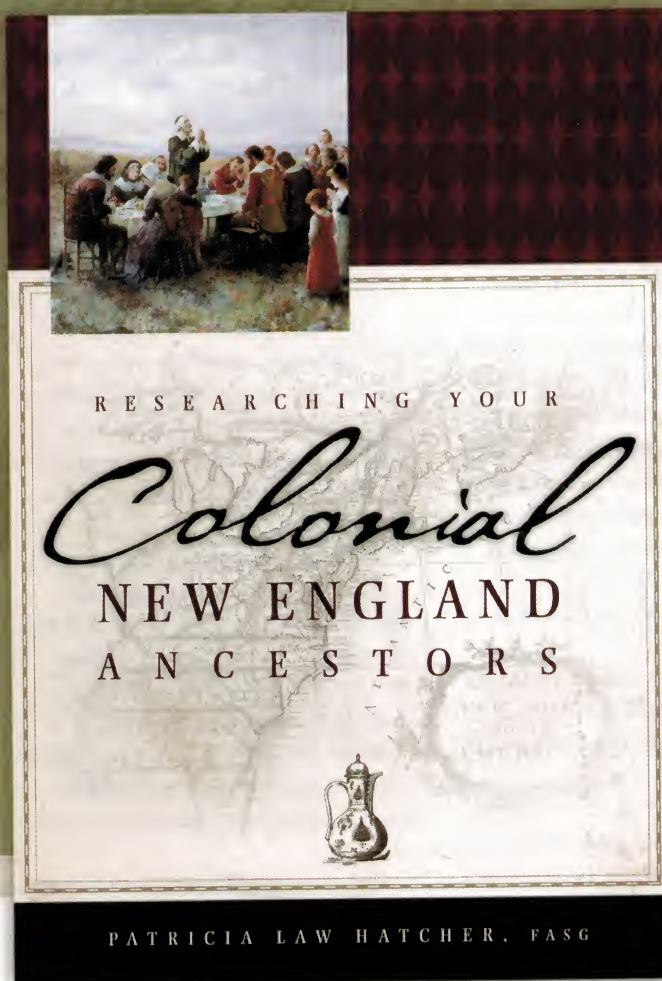
When Great Britain faces overcrowded jails and rising crime rates, the government decides to send counterfeiters, thieves, and other petty criminals to the Australian colonies. Over the next 80 years, more than 160,000 convicts and undesirables are transported.





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# digging

## Moneyed Trees Are Fun to Climb

BY MYRA VANDERPOOL  
GORMLEY, CG

*"The rich are different from  
you and me."*

— F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

FITZGERALD WAS RIGHT: THE rich are different. Even genealogically. But if you really want to hit the genealogical jackpot, pick ancestors and kinfolks who were not only rich but also involved in politics and elected to state or national positions.

All kinds of their triumphs and tragedies made it into newspapers. Their biographies appear in local histories. They are mentioned in year-books and college histories. And sometimes their family letters and records appear in the manuscript collections of archives and historical repositories.

Dr. Elijah Lewis Connally of Georgia was just the right kind of rich man. Born in Floyd County, Georgia, in 1837, he lived to be 92 and died in Atlanta. Not only was he successful as a physician and a businessman, he also served as a surgeon in the Confederate army. He married well, to Mary Virginia Brown, the daughter of Joseph E. Brown, four-time governor of Georgia and a U.S. senator.

Wading through thousands of "hits" in Atlanta newspapers about this family took a great deal of time but turned up an embarrassment of riches.

Dr. Connally's obituary appeared in the local newspaper and in the *New York Times*. Other family members'

obituaries, including those of Connally's mother and brother, also turned up. Brothers, sisters, in-laws, children, nieces, nephews, and cousins were revealed. These pearls enabled me to untangle some of the gnarled roots of Connally's ancestors, including an Atlanta pioneer couple that had 16 children.

When Dr. Connally's daughters married, their weddings were social events; details, like those of Frances Connally and Hal Fitzgerald Hentz's wedding, appeared in local papers. Take this example from the *Atlanta Constitution*:

*Preceding the entire bridal party as they entered the parlor was the bride's mother, wearing her own wedding gown of white satin, retaining the graceful style of 40 years ago and trimmed in rare rose print lace.*

News of Connally's son's graduation from college was duly noted in the local press, as were the family's travels abroad.

The rich *are* different. And like the Connallys, their wealth of genealogical jewels provides sparkling treasures for anyone researching a large and many-branched family tree.

**MYRA VANDERPOOL GORMLEY** spends her days untangling her illustrious roots and pruning her family's notorious branches—the latter being a seemingly full-time job. Reach her at [myravg@wamail.net](mailto:myravg@wamail.net).





# The Red Violin

BY REBECCA MONTGOMERY

FOR ME, THIS VIOLIN was love at first sight, so I set out to track it through history. Within a year I had found some bills of sale with matching descriptions and that sort of thing. It might have been in a collection in royal Prussia, though there were a lot of instruments there. In the late 1800s, it was in Romania. After that, I couldn't find it until it showed up in America.

Most violins coming from Europe in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century were either made new in factories for export or brought by immigrants. As it's not a 19<sup>th</sup>-century factory violin (these are easy to spot), the best explanation is that it immigrated with someone.

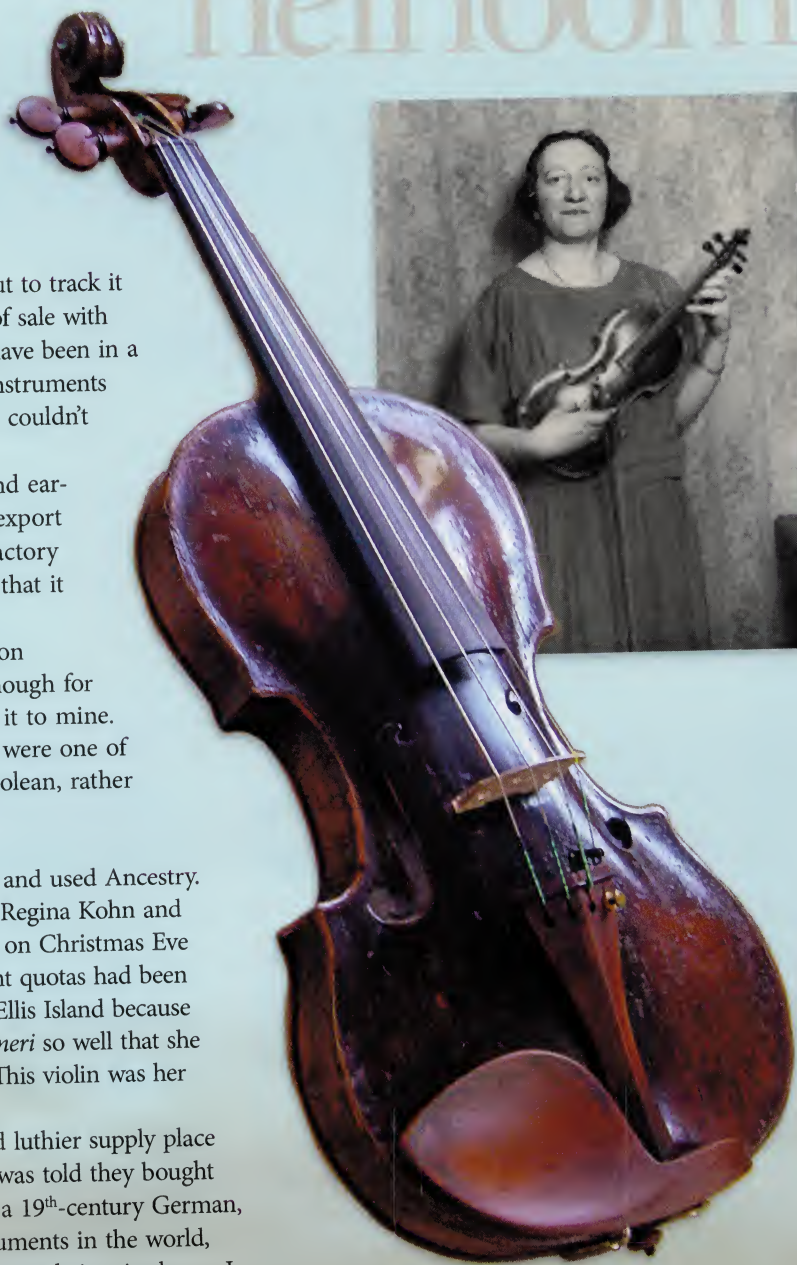
I searched hundreds of photographs and immigration records and found a photo showing the violin well enough for me to take some tracings of the outline and compare it to mine. A perfect match. This wouldn't be too surprising if it were one of the 8 billion Stradivarius copies, but being an old Tyrolean, rather known for odd shapes and styles, it's pretty rare to find exact duplicates.

I tracked down the name of the owner of the violin and used Ancestry.com to find out more: the owner's name was Rebecca Regina Kohn and she was born about 1885. She immigrated to America on Christmas Eve 1923 and was detained for two days because immigrant quotas had been exceeded. She was eventually allowed to pass through Ellis Island because she could play the violin: she played Schumann's *Traumeri* so well that she was classed as an artist and wasn't affected by quotas. This violin was her ticket in.

How did I get the violin? From an online violin and luthier supply place in Prague that buys violins from all over the world. I was told they bought this one from a person in New York. They listed it as a 19<sup>th</sup>-century German, a good guess since those are the most abundant instruments in the world, but being a violin appraiser and maker, I was able to spot their mistake, so I snatched up this violin.

This fiddle is my life and searching through all this history has brought me even closer to it. I currently play it in a number of places near me. I can't find a better-sounding violin anywhere.

Submit your heirloom photos and stories at  
[www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit](http://www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit).  
 If we publish yours, you'll earn \$100.





# X Marks the Spot

Everyone loves buried treasure and genealogical records are full of them. All you have to do is read the map right. In this case, the map is a series of clues found in other records. Think *National Treasure*, but with your ancestors. Here are three examples:

## CITY DIRECTORIES!

In this chest of jewels you'll learn where your ancestor lived, who his or her neighbors were, and you'll get a view of where he or she lived. You can also browse it to find others in that same city with the same surname and use it as a starting point for other treasure-hunting expeditions.

Begin at **NEWSPAPER ROCK** and climb to the dead tree with Obituary carved in it.

Starting on the path marked with the right city, climb to the rim of **CITY DIRECTORY PEAK**.

Start at **FAMILY LORE ABOUT YOUR ANCESTOR'S BIRTH DATE LAGOON**.

Move 10 paces and look for the large rock marked "**CENSUS RECORDS**." Find the first one following your ancestor's birth. On it is an inscription with a city.



**CEMETERY RECORDS!**

Lying in wait for you is everything from a map to the cemetery that is the final resting place of your ancestor to death dates, information on other relatives buried nearby, and even transcriptions of grave marker messages.

At the obituary, move 100 paces to the **GROVE OF LOCAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY TREES.**

From the genealogical society, move to the **SIGN MARKED INDEXES TO CEMETERY RECORDS.**

**PASSPORT APPLICATIONS!**

Dig here and find a trove of genealogical information such as birth date and place, as well as the real treasure: a description of your ancestor, historical context, signatures from and information about witnesses (who were often family), and maybe even a photo.

Move 500 paces into **PASSPORT COVE.**

Starting at **WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR ANCESTOR'S IMMIGRATION BEACH**, follow the tracks of that strange entry on a passenger list that shows up at the wrong place and the wrong time.





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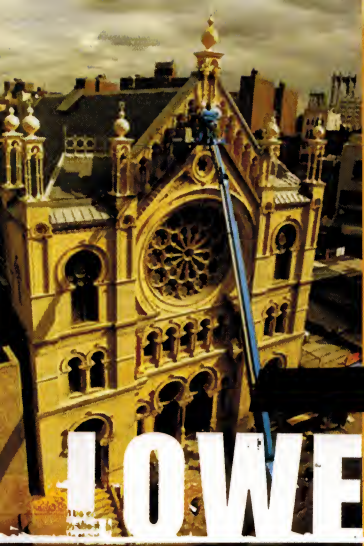


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# Visiting History on the LOWER EAST SIDE

BY JENNIE KAUFMAN

IN THE 1890S, IMMIGRANTS were streaming from Ellis Island into New York City's Lower East Side. One block might house 2,000 newcomers. Pushcarts, shoppers, and children filled the streets with clamor.

Docent Barry Feldman tells the story to visitors sitting in the main sanctuary at the Museum at Eldridge Street, formerly the Eldridge Street Synagogue. The room is 70 feet from floor to vaulted ceiling, 74 feet long and 50 feet wide, with a grand balcony. Moorish arches rise over mahogany pews; stained-glass windows line the walls; Tiffany-inspired floral shades accent the glowing brass fixtures. A magnificent rose window overlooks it all.

In the tenements across Eldridge Street, eight or more people could be crammed into three small, dim rooms totaling 325 square feet.

"Imagine what it's like to come from that into this," Feldman says. "Imagine what it's like to worship here."

The synagogue was built in 1887 for an eastern European congregation; by 1910, half a million Jews lived on the Lower East Side. But the population shifted over the decades, the main sanctuary was closed, and the building deteriorated.

In 1989, the nonprofit Eldridge Street Project began restoration of the synagogue. Its completion was celebrated in December 2007.

"The Holocaust severed ties to Europe," Feldman says. For many American Jews, the Lower East Side is as far back as they go. "This is what is considered to be home. This is what they come looking for."

**JENNIE KAUFMAN** is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, New York.

## Getting the Full Picture

- At the museum's Gural-Rabinowitz Family History Center, visitors can listen to oral histories, check the partial list of former congregants, or learn more through workshops on collecting family history.  
<[www.eldridgestreet.org](http://www.eldridgestreet.org)>

- At the Lower East Side Tenement Museum (97 Orchard Street), visitors can see restored period apartments of five families who lived there from the 1870s to the 1930s. Guided tours examine the worlds of Jewish garment workers and the Sicilian Baldizzi family. A "living history"

tour features a costumed actress portraying 14-year-old Victoria Confino, who answers questions about the life of new immigrants in 1916.  
<[www.tenement.org](http://www.tenement.org)>



# What Did They Do?

BY GEORGE G. MORGAN

EVEN OUR ANCESTORS had to earn a living. To really understand how they spent their days, try creating a resumé for them.

Start by organizing all you know about your ancestor's work experience in chronological sequence. Occupation information can be obtained in census population schedules; military service records; city directories; employment records; an SS-5 application; family records such as letters, postcards, journals and diaries; and other sources.

Work backwards chronologically, like in a modern resumé. For my ancestor Dr. Wilson, I chose to include education, employment history, and professional activities, although there are a host of other options you could consider. You'll find that the information will fall into place and provide an insightful view of your ancestor's working life. Make resumes for people all over your family tree and you may find trends or even a previously unknown family business.

Dr. Joseph McKnight Wilson, MD  
Lemley's District  
Huntersville, N.C.

**Education:**  
1856-1857 Medical College of South Carolina, Charleston, S.C.  
1854-1856 Davidson College, Davidson, N.C.  
1846-1852 Studied at William Patterson's School, Davidson, N.C.  
1840-1846 Studied at public school in Huntersville, N.C.

**Employment History:**  
1890-Present Practiced medicine and surgery at Good Samaritan Hospital in Charlotte, N.C.  
1877-1890 Private practice in Mecklenburg County, N.C.  
1865-1877 Practiced medicine with my father, Dr. Isaac Wilson, MD, until his retirement.  
1862-1865 Worked as surgeon in military hospitals in the area surrounding Charlotte, N.C., for the Army of the Confederate States of America.  
Practiced medicine with my father, Dr. Isaac Wilson, MD.

**Professional Activities:**  
1890-1891 Helped organize Good Samaritan Hospital in Charlotte, N.C.  
1887 Assisted with organization of Thompson Orphanage in Mecklenburg County, N.C., and volunteered medical care.  
1865-1880 Volunteered medical care to Confederate Veterans.

## Before the Crack of Dawn ...

EVER WONDER HOW your ancestor made it to an early, early, early morning shift? In the UK, they may have relied on a "knocker-upper" or a "knocker-up"—a person whose job it was to wake up pre-dawn workers. He or she would knock on the doors or windows of workers to roust them out of bed before their shifts began. No word on who would wake the knocker-upper.



The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the								
Over Parish (or Township) of	Municipal Borough of	Municipal Ward of	Parliamentary Borough of	Town or Village or Hamlet of	Urban Sanitary District of	Street		
Leeds	Leeds	East	Leeds	Leeds	Leeds			
No. of Schedules	ROAD, STREET, Lane, and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES Units in the House (A) or (B)	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON- DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of		Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION
						Males	Females	
69	Mythen Cross Road	1	Kate Do Henry Whelton Martha Do Elizabeth Whelton	Daughter (sister) Wife Daughter	Single Married Married Single	3 48 45 17	Knocker-up Knocker-up Knocker-up Scholar	1 5 5 1



## To the Moon

IF YOUR FAMILY TREE feels a bit too crowded on Earth, maybe it's time to shoot for the moon. The X-Prize's Lunar Legacy project lets you do just that: send an image and message to the moon. Scan your family tree, send a historic family photo, or create something brand new. While the price is right—just \$10—there are limits: images cannot exceed 1MB and messages are text only.

•WWW.LUNARLEGACY.ORG•





# You Can't Inherit a House Divided

BY JIM VESCOVI

WHEN I TRAVELED TO ITALY on my honeymoon, I expected to dig up a trove of information from my great-aunt and great-uncle who still resided in the old family house. I learned a lot. But I also discovered there was so much I'd never know.

When I arrived in Italy, I asked my Great-uncle Domenico to show me the family land. He pointed behind the house to a patch where corn used to grow. It was no bigger than 200 x 200 feet. Then he led me along a road, past a cheese factory, and onto a rutted lane that wound past trees and dilapidated barns before he stopped, surveyed the area with a slow, 360-degree turn, and pointed again, "There. We own that."

What? I couldn't tell what he was pointing at.

"The land between this tree behind you and the corner of that house," he continued, "from that house to that fence post, and from the post to the stream."

The plot was tiny, no bigger than the first.

The day was cool and overcast. Up the mountain we went, with Domenico waving right and left. "We own that, from the stump to the well and down past the lane, but not including that barn," or "That's ours. From this garden to that pasture beyond those trees." Some of the parcels had trapezoidal shapes; others contained so many twists and turns they looked like gerrymandered congressional districts. Not one amounted to a respectable family farm by American standards.

"Why don't we own one big piece of land? Wouldn't it have been easier?" I asked.

Cigarette dangling from his lip, Domenico suppressed bemusement. "The land is old here," he said. "Families acquired it one piece at a time."

That's when I wanted to ask him to whom our house really belonged, but I knew it was a touchy subject.

## Mission Accomplished

Before leaving for Italy, my grandmother told me to look for a dress she'd left behind during her last visit 30 years earlier. She gave me the precise location: third floor, first room on the left, oak armoire. Green dress. She stressed that I check without Domenico's wife knowing.

"You want me to bring it back?" I asked.

"No," she said. "Just make sure it's there."

Leaving behind the dress, I learned, was her way of asserting that a third of the house still belonged to my grandfather.

When I returned from Italy, Grandma pulled me aside and asked, "*La vesta, l'era la?* The dress, was it there?"

Yes, I said. Right where she left it.

## Wills Divided

The house itself had been left by my great-grandfather to his three sons: Domenico; my Grandfather Tony who immigrated to America in 1922; and Paolo, who immigrated to Argentina. For years, my father tried to get those three brothers to make a decision about the house. Should it be sold? If one brother wanted it, what should he pay his siblings in compensation? But no one was willing to act. Instead, each brother owned a portion of the house—not shares, individual rooms.

After my grandparents died, I found letters from Paolo to Tony asking that a monetary debt he owed my grandfather be discharged. In exchange, Paolo would give up two of his rooms in the house. But there were no other records of this agreement to be found.

When I asked my father if these letters would complicate the matter of who owned the house, my father laughed. "Are you kidding?" he said. "These old peasants kept tabs on everything. I once told Domenico he should take the house and pay off his brothers. He said, 'Fine, but we have to take into account that I put a new roof on the place in 1979.' When I told my father, he said, 'Yeah, but when I was there in '58, I rebuilt the terrace.'"

Suffice it to say, no single person yet owns the house. Instead, half of the house is closed off, crumbling away. To me, that portion holds a family history that remains beyond reach. What I can't know has to be glued together with conjecture and imagination. For now, I just have to put it aside with the piece of stone façade that I took when I was there.

JIM VESCOVI is a New York-based writer and editor.



## Keeping Up with the Joneses

AMY JOHNSON CROW, CG, CGI

*Money isn't everything. But for family historians, financial records can mean a lot.*



FEDERAL CENSUS RECORDS tell us a lot about our families—names, relationships, ages. But what can you do with those real estate values (1850, 1860, and 1870 censuses) and personal property values (1860 and 1870)?

A value for real estate is a clue to look at land records for more family history information—deeds can contain residences, wives' names, and sometimes relationships. Real estate values can also tell you more about the community in which your ancestor lived. For example, in 1860, Pike Township, Indiana, showed a cluster of farmers with no real estate and a nearby farmer with \$4,000 in real property. The instructions to the 1860 census takers defined a farmer as someone “who pursues agriculture professionally or practically.” A man who was employed by a farmer for wages was to be listed as a farm laborer. How did all of those people who were classified as farmers farm with no real property? Maybe they rented land from the farmer who owned so much.

Pike Township was a typical rural American township. Examining the reported real property and personal property values can also help you understand more about the economic make-up of the township. Real estate holdings ranged from \$25 to \$6,500. Of the 173 people who told census takers that they owned real property, 45 percent had \$1,000 worth or less; another 30 percent had holdings of \$1,001 to \$2,000. And only 2 percent had holdings of more than \$5,000.

Compare your ancestor's property value to the value of his or her neighbors. Sure, \$1,200 in real estate might sound like a lot for 1850, but in Pike Township, it was just about average.

As is always the case with census records, you need to keep an open mind. Not only is it unknown who gave the information, but there is also a question of honesty. Even if the head of household was the one answering the questions, how forthright was he or she with the enumerator? Think of it this way—if a neighbor knocked on

your door and asked you how much all of your property is worth, would you tell him or her?

It's true that the values of real estate and personal property in these censuses won't give you an ancestor's mother's maiden name. However, property values can give you ideas for further research—maybe you'll get lucky in one of those sources and find a way to discover that maiden name. But the greatest thing you may take away from an ancestor's property value is how well he or she fared in the classic American pastime: were they forever trying to keep up with the Joneses, or were your ancestors actually the Joneses that everyone else was trying to be?

**AMY JOHNSON CROW, CG,** is a frequent contributor to *Ancestry Magazine*. She can be reached at [amy@amyjohnsoncrow.com](mailto:amy@amyjohnsoncrow.com).



# Fraternally Yours

BY PAULA STUART-WARREN, CG

Nov 12 03 03:02P Fleming 6365198413 p.1

CANTER, FRED HARRY  
**ANCIENT AND ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY**  
 SOUTHERN JURISDICTION OF THE UNITED STATES

SEP 12 1945 VALLEY OF ST. LOUIS SEP 12 1945 19.....

To the Officers and Members of  
 St. Louis Lodge of Perfection, St. Louis Chapter Rose Croix,  
 Missouri Council Knights-Kadosh, Missouri Consistory:

I am a Master Mason in good standing in Cuba Lodge No. 312 under the jurisdiction  
 of the Grand Lodge of Missouri (and late a member ..... Degree of the Scottish Rite Bodies  
 in the Valley of ..... as shown by Certificate of Good Standing or Dimit attached).

I was born on the 20 day of April 1902 in St. Louis State of Missouri  
 My residence is Cuba Mo Missouri Telephone 65  
 I have resided in Cuba Mo Missouri 7 years 9 months  
 My business address is Cuba Mo Telephone 65 or 21  
 Send mail to P.O. Box 273 Cuba State of Missouri  
 My occupation is Merchant  
 State position, name and kind of business in which you are engaged (CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE)

**FEE FOR DEGREES**

Lodge	4° to 14°	\$40.00
Chapter	15° to 18°	30.00
Council	19° to 30°	30.00
Consistory	31° to 32°	60.00
Total		\$160.00

Not less than \$40.00 must accompany the petition.

No fee is required for Affiliation, but a brother of the Jurisdiction of any other Supreme Council affiliating with this Consistory must remit \$4.00 for Patents of the Thirty-second Degree.

Make check payable to  
 St. Louis Lodge of Perfection No. 1

Mail petition to  
 The Secretary, A.A.S.R.  
 Scottish Rite Cathedral  
 Grand and Lindell Boulevards  
 St. Louis, Mo.

(CONTINUED FROM OTHER SIDE)

My height is 6 feet inches; Color of eyes blue Color of hair red  
 \*I have never previously applied for the Scottish Rite Degrees of any

I now respectfully petition to receive the degrees from the 4th to the 32d if elected promising always to bear true faith and allegiance to the Supreme Council of the Thirty-third and Last Degree for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States.

Name of Applicant Fred HARRY CANTER (Signature)  
 Recommended by: 1. Sam C. [Signature] 2. George A. [Signature]  
 (Must be signed by 27th members, 14th Degree at least)

References: 1. C. C. Cox 2. [Signature]  
 (Name) (Address)  
 2. [Signature] 3. [Signature]  
 (Name) (Address)

\*If applicant has previously applied for any of the degrees, he will strike out the word "never" and state time, place, and to what Scottish Rite Body application was made.

Does GRANDPA'S TOMBSTONE have strange symbols on it? Does an old pin or medal of his boast odd initials? These may signify he was a member of a fraternal organization. Follow the five following steps to learn more:

**1. Analyze the Acronym.** Acronyms on a tombstone, in an obituary, or on a certificate may represent the title of the organization. Learn their meanings with a Web search or in Kip Sperry's *Abbreviations and Acronyms: A Guide for Family Historians* (Ancestry, 2003).

**2. Search Directories.** Directories of organizations, guides about symbols, and histories of groups can be found online, in libraries, and in city directories. Check a library for the *Encyclopedia of Organizations* (Thomson Gale, 1997); websites for pictures of ribbons, pins, and insignias; and old city directories for lists of organizations in your ancestor's town and day.

**3. Join Historical Societies.** Local histories and sections about a town's organizations.

Newspapers carried meeting notices, officer elections, and related stories. Fraternal organizations often published newsletters or magazines. Check historical societies for the whereabouts of each.

**4. Go to the Organization.** Once you've identified the organization, see if it still exists. Check with today's local lodges and clubs as well as state and national offices to see if they have records.

**5. Look Online.** Publications that include histories of fraternal organizations may be found at Google Books <<http://books.google.com>>. Also, check "Societies - Fraternal Organizations" at Cyndi's List <[www.cyndislist.com](http://www.cyndislist.com)> for additional information. Try a search for the organization title in the card catalog at Ancestry.com (accessed via the Search tab), where you'll find gems such as *The Worldwide Masonic Directory of 1860*.

PAULA STUART-WARREN, CG, is a regular contributor to *Ancestry Magazine*. She can be reached at [PaulaStuartWarren@gmail.com](mailto:PaulaStuartWarren@gmail.com).





IS

BY JON ENTINE

SEVEN YEARS AGO, I RECEIVED a horrific call from my sister, who was then 54. She had noticed a lump in her breast. It was diagnosed as a rare form of cancer known as BRCA2, or BREast CANcer 2 mutation 6174delT, one of three breast and ovarian mutations that prominently target Jews or descendants of Jews.

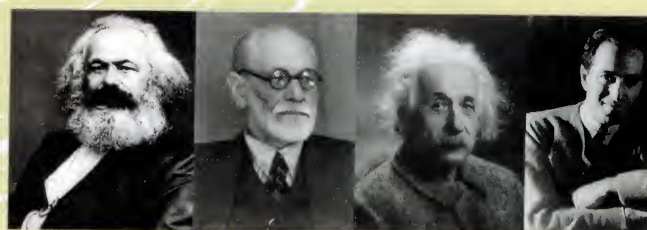
My sister has survived her travail, but the long-term prognosis is mixed. It's estimated that one in 43 Jews (about 2.3 percent), women and men, carries one of these three gene faults. My mother, grandmother, and aunt all died nearly 30 years ago of mysterious cancers. Our family tree disappears into the 19th century eastern European Diaspora, so it's difficult to trace the history of the



DNA ABOLISHING

## differences

OR EMBRACING THEM?



wayward genes. Were we the victims of bad luck? Or bad DNA?

We've all heard the phrase, "We are, regardless of race, 99 percent the same." The inclination even by some scientists to highlight the threads that bind together the world's diverse populations and to underplay our uniqueness is certainly understandable. But it's also misleading.

#### vs and Ancestry

romance of the egg and sperm ensures that we not differ as individuals but as groups. Science is moving from the kumbaya phase of genetic variation—the 99 percent factoid—to the reality that humans have evolved in distinct groups, almost like pack animals, over the course of

geneticists generally avoid using the term "race" to characterize population differences, ances-

try does matter. Because modern humans move around and fool around far more expeditiously than their ancient ancestors, modern "races" and ethnic groups are fuzzy at the edges.

As a rule, the more historically isolated a population—because of geographical or cultural barriers—the more distinct its genetic makeup. Clues about the origin of diseases have prompted researchers to focus on a number of geographically isolated groups: Icelanders, Finns, indigenous Ainu of Japan, American Indians, Costa Ricans, Maori of New Zealand, Sardinians, Basques, rural Chinese, and various West African tribes and their descendants, are examples. Known as founder populations because they tend to preserve the genetic makeup of the founders, these groups have two key attributes: only a few thousand primary ancestors and little intermarriage in succeeding generations. Other genetic islands have been shaped by strong religious



and cultural beliefs—gypsies; the kindred clans of Mennonites, Amish, and Hutterites; and Parsis. But no gene pool has been more crucial for DNA research and the quest to develop medical cures than the Diaspora communities of the Jews.

The number of Jews worldwide is thought to be about 13–15 million, although estimates are hazy because of the complex notion of Jewish identity. There are only a few million Mizrahim (also known as “Oriental Jews”)—those descended from Jewish communities in the Middle East. There are a few million more Sep-

hardim (from the Hebrew word *Sefarad*, meaning “Spain”), who trace their ancestry to Iberia or North Africa, the center of Diaspora Jewry until the medieval Inquisitions. Approxi-

mately 10 million Jews (5.5 million in the United States) are Ashkenazim, a word derived from the Hebrew word for “German,” which suggests recent European roots.

### Who Is a Jew?

Scientists study group genetic variation because it offers keys to understanding the origins of diseases—the real focus of human genome research. The fact that scientists now acknowledge group-to-group differences shouldn’t be seen as resurrecting problematic racial theories. But it does mean we need a vocabulary to discuss human differences. This is particularly important to Ashkenazi Jews, who are at the center of this debate.

This is prickly stuff. After all, Jews (and other minorities) have paid a heavy price throughout history for being considered a race. “Race” is considered a taboo concept in this politically correct era. But for those of us interested in genetics and revelations that have emerged from Haplotype Map (HapMap) research, it must be addressed.

The notion of race is also embedded in the politics of the Middle East, where one of the key issues is the so-called “right of return”—the belief that Jews have spiritual claim to Israel. A walk through the geopolitical hazard zone known as the Internet unearths a number of websites challenging the premise of the Jewish right of return. They claim, rightfully, that most Palestinians can trace their ancestry back to ancient Palestine. But many of Israel’s fiercest critics also claim, dubiously, that most modern Jews—Ashkenazim—have no ancestral links to ancient Israel.

### What Does the DNA say?

What are the ancestral origins of Ashkenazi Jews? Using a DNA testing service, I discovered that my own Y-chromosome, which has remained unchanged from generation to generation except for the accumulation of DNA mistakes, is haplogroup R1a. That probably marks me as a descendant of the Khazars, making my male lineage not Semitic but Eurasian.



*DNA has the potential to bring people into larger ancestral pools. But there’s a flip side, too: those same DNA tests emphasize differences. For family historians, the good and bad of that fact are just beginning to be realized.*

### What About Women?

The maternal Ashkenazi lineage is more complicated and still to be fully unraveled. Israeli geneticist Doron Behar found that about 4 million of today’s Ashkenazi Jews—about 40 percent of Jews originating in Central and Eastern Europe—descend from just four women, probably “founding mothers” of four large medieval Jewish villages. But many of the other founding mothers of Ashkenazi Jewry do not appear to have Semitic roots. “The Jewish men appear to have established small, scattered Jewish villages in Europe, probably with local women,” says University geneticist David Goldstein. “But once the [local Ashkenazi] communities were founded, the barriers went up,” slamming the shut to new converts. They subsequently raised their children as Jews.





According to David Goldstein, a Duke University geneticist and a key researcher in population studies, most of the male founders of European Jewry were probably Jewish traders or money lenders who came to the area without spouses. They mixed with local pagans and probably saw an infusion of some Khazarian royalty when the empire crumbled.

Based on male and female DNA evidence, over the past 1,000 years or so, the Jews and gentiles that made up the founding families of Ashkenazi Jewry adopted a very strong Jewish identity. They remained fiercely insular and married within their community. Conversion, while allowed, was difficult.

The closed nature of their society has left a deep genetic footprint. University of Arizona geneticist and Y-chromosomal expert Michael Hammer estimates that the rate of non-Jews who entered the European Jewish gene pool over the past centuries was less than 0.5 percent per generation, at least until recent decades. As a result, Ashkenazim are considered one of the world's most distinctive populations (a term scientists use rather than the folkloric notion of "race"). That's made them a favorite of population geneticists—and a gold mine of data for DNA testing companies. It also helps explain why there are more than 40 diseases that are common to Jews and why major testing companies are beginning to roll out "ethnic panels" that focus on the behavioral and disease idiosyncrasies of distinctive populations.

### For Me

DNA is at once an atlas and time machine that can transport us to Biblical times and beyond, awakening us to the shared roots of civilization

and the promise of designer therapies to target disease. We are on the verge of expanding this tracking process beyond our male and female lineages to the entire human genome, which would give us a far more complete picture of the ethnic threads woven by nature to create each of us. The great paradox of human biodiversity research is that the only way to understand how similar humans are is to learn how we differ. That includes me.

After my sister's diagnosis, I had myself tested and was found to carry the same mutation that my sister carries. Its effects on men include a slight risk of breast cancer and an increased possibility of melanoma of the eye. But more frightening, my daughter, who is a product of a mixed Christian-Jewish marriage, has a 50/50 chance of carrying this gene fault; if she does, the probability that she will eventually contract cancer is estimated to be as high as 80 percent.

It wasn't surprising that in its end-of-the-year issue, *Science* magazine named "human genetic variation" ([www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/sci;318/5858/1842](http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/full/sci;318/5858/1842)) as the scientific breakthrough of 2007—we each carry pinpoints of DNA that suggest that maybe human population groups aren't really quite so alike. However slight our genetic differences may be, they are defining. They contain the map of our family trees back to the first modern humans. They catalog our vulnerability for many diseases. And they mark me indelibly as a Jew.

**JON ENTINE** is author of *Abraham's Children: Race, Identity and the DNA of the Chosen People* ([www.abrahamschildren.net](http://www.abrahamschildren.net)), and can be contacted via his website, <[www.jonentine.com](http://www.jonentine.com)>.

### Is Race a Step Backward?

The acknowledgment of identifiable human races and ethnic groups, including Jews, is not an endorsement of simplistic racist stereotyping. Those of us, scientists included, who have long endorsed the orthodoxy that racial differences are "skin deep" are having a difficult time adjusting to this new and provocative—but ultimately informative and sensible—reality. "Race is merely a shorthand to enable us to speak sensibly, though with no great precision, about genetic rather than cultural or political differences," notes Armand Marie Leroi, respected evolutionary developmental biologist at Imperial College in London. "But it is a shorthand that seems to be needed. One of the more painful spectacles of modern science is that of human geneticists piously disavowing the existence of races even as they investigate the genetic relationships between 'ethnic groups.'"







BY MEGAN SMOLENYAK SMOLENYAK

# Link TO THE PAST

What happens when there is **NO**  
**HEIR** apparent, but the found item  
is just too **GOOD** to dismiss?

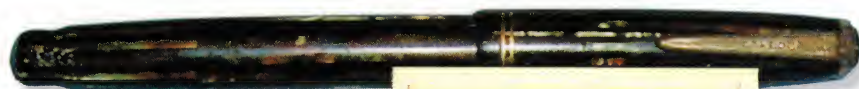
IT WAS TIME TO RESCUE ANOTHER orphan heirloom. Jim Gilmer from Alabama caught my eye because his request involved, of all things, a fountain pen with the original owner's name inscribed on it—Bill Lee Bell. Bill Bell. Unusual name. But it was the story behind the pen that really got my attention:

*The pen belonged to William Lee Bell, who was a WWII P47 Thunderbolt pilot shot down on 16 November 1944. Mrs. Doris Cooper, whose husband, Dr. Luther B. Cooper, died in 2004, is a good friend of ours. She mentioned several times that her husband had this pen in his possession for 60 years, that had belonged to a good friend and fellow pilot, who was KIA while on a mission. Dr. Cooper and William L. Bell were both members of the 513th Fighter Squadron, 406th Fighter Group based all over Europe during the Second World War. Mrs. Cooper found the pen in Dr. Cooper's personal effects after his death and recalled that he had often expressed a wish that he could return the pen to William L. Bell's family. Mrs. Cooper asked me if I could take on the challenge of finding a relative to whom she could return the pen. I told her that was probably beyond my capabilities but that I knew someone who might take the case. Thus I'm asking you to please consider doing just that.*

## Gilmer on the Case

What followed revealed that Jim was actually quite a detective. He detailed the sources and most of the information he had already gathered, primarily from Ancestry.com:





**REUNITING A PROMISE:** Bill Bell (pictured) owned the pen before his untimely death in World War II. A buddy's widow vowed to get it to its rightful family.



- ▶ A website for the 406th WWII Fighter Group, which has both William L. Bell and Luther Bancroft Cooper listed as members of the 513th Fighter Squadron
- ▶ WWII Casualty Listings, giving Lt. William L. Bell's date of death, gravesite, cemetery in Belgium, rank, and serial number and military unit
- ▶ WWII Conflict Veterans Interred Overseas, which furnished the additional fact that William was inducted into the service from California
- ▶ U.S. World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938–1946, providing William's birth year of 1921, enlistment date of 31 July 1942, enlistment place of Los Angeles County, California, and the information that he had four years of high school, was single without dependents, and was 67 inches tall and weighed 131 pounds
- ▶ California Birth Index, 1905–1995, showing the only matching listing for William L. Bell, born 7 December 1921 in Fresno County, California, and with a mother whose maiden name was Radley
- ▶ 1930 United States Federal Census, showing Billy L. Bell, approximately eight years old, living in a household in Fresno, California, with his father, Elmer L. Bell; his mother, Florence E. Bell; and six siblings

## California Gleaning

Jim had already done the lion's share of the work by locating Bill's birth family. I swiftly followed his trail and reached all the same conclusions he had. I knew that Bill's parents were Elmer and Florence and that he had brothers named Robert, George, and Morgan, and sisters named Dorothy, Ellen, and Mary. I also had approximate birth years for each sibling. So now the question was whether I could find them. With at least six candidates, I was optimistic.

I always silently cheer when any case I work on involves California because of the wonderful California Birth Index, 1905–1995 <[www.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=5247](http://www.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=5247)>, which Jim had already consulted. That's where I turned my attention next in my quest to find Bill's siblings. I knew

that if I could find their exact birth dates from this database, I would improve my odds of finding them in people-searching sites, the Social Security Death Index (SSDI), or perhaps the California Death Index.

## Rooting Out Radleys

Bell isn't the most common name, but it's not rare either, so I took advantage of the field provided for mother's maiden name in the California Birth Index and searched for anyone with the last name Bell whose mother was a Radley. Up popped the soldier, his sister Dorothy, and his brother Morgan.

But where were all the others?

I took each of the other children one at a time and did some additional digging. The eldest, Robert, proved stubborn, so I moved on. Next was Ellen A., born circa 1916. Not knowing the exact year, I searched for Ellen Bell, born 191\* (love those wildcards!), but left the mother's maiden name field blank. There she was with a mother named Radby. Radley/Radby? Everything else fit, so yes, this was Ellen.

I tried the same tactic for George F., who had been born circa 1920. This time Mom's name was Kadley. Once again, everything else fit, so this was the right fellow. Finally, I turned to Mary M., born circa 1927. Again, she easily popped up—with a mother named Rodley.

In just six records, the pilot's mother's name had appeared as Radley, Radby, Kadley, and Rodley. Perhaps if I had worked the database a little harder, I would have also unearthed Robert, but I decided that five siblings were more than enough to move forward.

## Please Don't Be in There!

With many of my cases, I find myself with mixed feelings. On one hand, I always hope to find folks alive and well. On the other hand, I have to be realistic. We don't live forever, and these days the privacy of the living is much more closely guarded than that of the deceased. From a practical standpoint, it's usually helpful to find at least one family member in a death index, as that provides a bridge to others. It may, for instance, lead to an obituary that lists survivors.

I decided to have a go at the California Death Index. Bill's parents had been born in the 1880s and 1890s, so I



rationalized that it would be best to start with them since it would have been newsworthy if either of them were still with us.

I entered their names and limited the search to Fresno County. What I found made my heart sink and left me with a mystery. The parents had died within a day of each other: 25 and 26 June 1945—only about six months after Bill was killed in action in Europe. I almost choked as I registered the impact this must have had on the family. And I wondered what happened.

Still, I needed to find Bill's family (in a sense, this discovery made it seem even more important), so I continued. I focused on each of his brothers and sisters, entering at least their first names and exact birth dates. I was almost relieved when I failed to find sibling after sibling. No Morgan, no Mary, no Ellen, no George . . . Phew! Maybe some of them were still with us.

### Who Leaves California?

In my experience, many people arrive in California from other places, but not too many leave. Perhaps it was because of the shattering events of 1944 and 1945 that much of this family scattered. My optimism over not finding the siblings in the California Death Index took a hit when I turned my attention to the Social Security Death Index. There was Morgan, who had seemingly died in England. And there was Mary, who had passed away just a few years ago in Nevada. George had died in the 1980s in Washington. Ellen was the only one who remained in California, and her passing had been too recent to appear in the California Death Index. Sigh.

### Database Ping-Pong

Now I needed to shift my search to nieces and nephews rather than brothers and sisters. I did so by bouncing back and forth between a people-searching site (I used PrivateEye.com) and the California Birth Index. One of the handy aspects of such sites is that they frequently mention others associated with the same address(es), and if ages are included it's often possible to piece together theories about the children of the recently deceased.

I used the site to find the deceased siblings, especially those who had passed away in recent years, who were still listed on the people-finding site. If I found a possible niece or nephew of Bill's, I would return to the California Birth Index to see if I could find that person's birth. The family had gone in different directions, but most had done so after the birth of a few kids. Equipped with exact birth dates, I would go back to the people-searching site. Bouncing back and forth between the two databases, I was able

to track down nieces and nephews in Washington, Nevada, Florida, and Oklahoma. As best as I could tell, there was no one left in California.

### Who Ya Gonna Call?

I had plenty of candidates to contact about the pen, but I debated for a while about which one to call. The largest cluster of the family now resided in Washington, so I decided to focus there. I figured that would maximize the chances of finding someone interested and provide a bit of an insurance policy that the pen would be passed on to future generations. I found what appeared to be Morgan's oldest son and picked up the phone.

He wasn't there, but his wife was. As I explained my peculiar reason for calling, it quickly became clear that this family would be ideal custodians. She told me how incredible it was that I had called. She said she had never known Bill since he had died so young, but she had recently come into possession of a photo of him. She mentioned that one of her daughters had recently been bitten by the genealogy bug and would be delighted to hear of this because, not surprisingly, her father's side of the family had proved challenging due to the tragedy of the 1940s and subsequent mini diaspora. Morgan hadn't spoken much of his family and had moved to England, as his SSDI entry had hinted. And the back-to-back deaths of the parents? A train accident.

### Back to Jim

At this point, I e-mailed Jim with the contact information for the return of the pen. He was delighted and, as I learned, was only steps behind me. Continuing his sleuthing, he had just turned up the nephew in Florida and would have likely found the others with a little more time. By the time you read this, the pen will have traveled from Alabama to Washington, where it will provide a link between the past of a Californian who lost his life in Europe in 1944 and his relatives today.

### More Orphans?

Maybe now you're thinking, "Hey, I've got that \_\_\_\_\_ that I found when I moved in that old house/went to that flea market/inherited it from my grandmother/etc. Maybe I should submit it." Yes, you should. Just go to <www.honoringourancestors.com>, click on the **Submissions** menu, and select **Orphan Heirlooms**. Maybe you'll see your rescue story in the next issue.



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What happens when you **THINK** you know their name, but the official data **DOESN'T** seem to agree with you? A pair of family historians set the records straight.



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		Jones Jr	20 J B					Myrtleland				
103		Richard A	14 M B					New York				

## BY DALE FUNSTON

AS WITH MANY OTHERS researching German ancestors, I have grown accustomed to the difficulties surrounding the various ways German surnames can be spelled. Often times, the original German name is spelled phonetically in records and becomes “Americanized” over the course of time. Researching my great-grandfather, however, has been one of those difficult cases, and in this one, other facts about his life have proven to be more valuable than the spelling of his family name.

My great-grandfather Robert and his brother, Hooker, used the name Shapel since moving to Allen County, Kansas, around 1878. According to a family source, they lived in Elmira, New York, prior to the move. Many records exist for the Shapel family in Kansas, but I could find absolutely nothing about their time in New York. I suspected that the family name used in New York was some variation on the name Shapel, and I already knew that Shapel could show up as Schaeple, Schobel, Schappel, and Shoeball.

I wanted proof that the family really hailed from Elmira, so I decided to focus my efforts on finding the Shapels in a U.S. Federal Census for Elmira, New York—either 1860 or 1870.

I began my search of the census indexes at Ancestry.com by entering every conceivable spelling combination of Shapel. I received a lot of hits, but the ages or given names never seemed to match.

I scoured the Internet and various message boards for possible matches and ran across a potential sibling, Emil Schaple, born in 1855 and living in Elmira after 1880. But I still couldn't find a record of Robert, Hooker, or even Emil in Elmira.

I started to think that I was looking in the wrong place. Was it possible that the family did not immigrate to the U.S. until after 1870? All of the other evidence I had indicated an immigration in the 1850s. I refused to give up.

I went back to searching the census indexes, this time with a different approach: I left off the surname and searched the index for the more uncommon given names of Hooker and then Emil. Zero hits. However, when I searched for “Robert” in the 1860 census for Chemung County, New York, I received 156 hits. I narrowed down the results to six hits by entering the estimated birth year as 1860 +/- 2, but none of these six names appeared to be a variation of Shapel. But when I viewed the record for Robert Sharin and found a Hooker and an Emil, I realized I had finally found the record I was searching for.

The information for the brothers aligned with other records I had, but the name Sharin? Although it wasn't phonetically close, the spelling was close enough, and I surmised that the error occurred with the census taker, possibly the result of a language barrier.

And finally I had my conclusive proof that Hooker, Emil (Amel), and Robert had lived in Elnira, along with another previously unknown brother, Carl. I now had the given names of



both parents, Robert and Johanna, as well as the father's occupation as a butcher (although it is still unclear what happened to the parents after 1860). I was able to verify that the family immigrated sometime between 1855 and 1860, the years Emil and Robert were born.

Now, armed with new information, I'm planning to take the family research further—by locating an immigration record and eventually their ancestral hometown in Germany.

**DALE FUNSTON** is a family historian living in Colorado.

## His Name Wasn't Herbert!

BY HELEN HINCHLIFF, PH.D., CG, FASG

"We went all the way to Bristol to look for my husband's ancestry, but we couldn't find anything," my sister-in-law announced. What genealogist could resist a challenge like that? I armed myself with her father-in-law's name, Herbert Sage; his wife, Lottie Lane Forster; and his birth year, about 1874. Then I turned to Ancestry.com.

I found Lottie with her family in various censuses of Bristol, but, from 1881 through 1901, there was no Herbert Sage. Nor could I find him in the Civil Registration birth index. Days later, I would discover the trouble: his birth name wasn't Herbert! But I'm getting ahead of myself.

Herbert and Lottie had married just prior to immigrating to Selkirk, Manitoba, Canada, so I searched the 1911 Canadian census, the most recent available. Herbert was there, reporting his birth as August 1874; Lottie's was listed as May 1872. They immigrated in 1904. There was little new here, so I next looked for their marriage record.

An index entry at Ancestry.com for Herbert Sage reported a marriage dur-

ing the first quarter of 1904; an entry for Lottie Lane Forster referenced the same quarter. The certificate provided the following information:

*Herbert Sage, age 29, bachelor, in the "cycle trade," son of Henry Albert Sage, boot manufacturer, and Lottie Lane Forster, 31, spinster, daughter of Samuel Forster, accountant, were married on 29 February 1904 at the parish church of Bishopston, County of Bristol.*

In 1861 and 1871, Henry Albert Sage and his wife, Charlotte, were living in Bristol with their growing family. However, in 1881, the first year their son Herbert should have appeared, Charlotte Annie Sage was enumerated as a widow, working as a licensed victualer at the "Stag & Hounds." Most of her children were not living with her. Maybe Herbert was with relatives, but where?

Online indexed censuses are a great boon, allowing searches through international records. But still I found no Herbert Sage anywhere in England—or beyond. Did the census taker simply miss him in 1881, again in 1891, and yet again in 1901? Or, could he have gone by another name? If the latter were true, then I had one search strategy left—pair surname with occupation.

Like the index to the American 1880 census, the British 1881 census can be searched by occupation. A few years back, I had success finding five long-lost Davidson ancestors by pairing surname with "cooper," their ancestral occupation. But what occupation could I use for a six-year-old child?

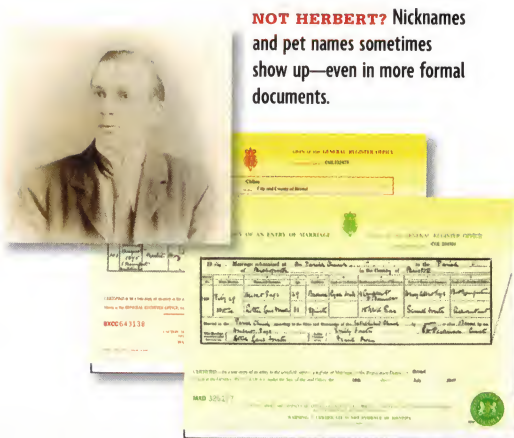
The British census was designed to measure whether a child was attending school by having the enumerator enter "scholar" in the occupation category. By pairing Sage with "scholar," I found Bertie Sage and two brothers living as visitors in the household

of James Bailey, 64, farm labourer, and his family in Westerleigh, a parish near Bristol. Reportedly, Bertie was only four years old, but his birth certificate confirmed that I had found my boy. Bertie Sage, the son of Henry Albert Sage and Charlotte Sage (formerly Pullin), was born 2 August 1875 in the city and county of Bristol. In 1891, Bertie Sage was a servant living in the home of Albert Eastman, timber merchant in Bristol. In 1901, Bertie missed the census—he was in the Boer War.

I asked my sister-in-law if she had ever heard Lottie call Herbert by a nickname. "She always called him Bertie," she replied, reminding me that you can never ask too many questions.

Queen Victoria had called her beloved Prince Albert "Bertie." Thousands of British parents followed suit. Perhaps others will find that their Herbert or Albert or even Adelbert is actually indexed as just plain Bertie.

**HELEN HINCHLIFF** has been finding ancestors since 1982. She serves on the board of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly.



Submit your breakthroughs and near misses at  
[www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit](http://www.ancestrymagazine.com/submit).



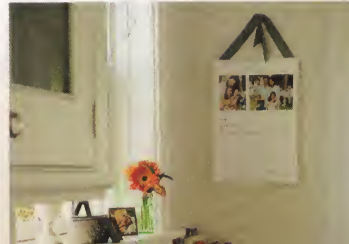


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# When Good Names Go Bad?

BY MATTHEW RAYBACK

SO YOUR SURNAME IS SMITH, OR WALKER, OR ANDERSON—think your family history search is doomed because of your common last name? If you're lucky, there may be hope, because nothing narrows down a search like a unique first name.

Take, for example, the surname Smith. A search through the historical records at Ancestry.com yields 9,895,391 results. That's more than a little daunting. But once there was a man named Verb Smith. Be the lucky dog who is looking for him and your Ancestry.com search results are pared down to seven.

Now, for the surname Walker—the search goes from 1,925,609 to nine if you're looking for the Walker with the memorable first name of Pig. Anyone need an Anderson? This one drops from 2,628,226 to one if you search for the first name Gossip.

Remember, there's more value than just water-cooler conversation in the nutty names sitting in your family tree. Take Hades Fryher, Holiday Bible, Sink Slappey, or Money Scales: if you're lucky enough to have any of these guys (or gals—it's sometimes hard to tell) in your pedigree, be grateful. Your search may be easier than ever.

*Don't know if you have any weird names in your family tree? Not sure where to look? Check out Ancestry Publishing's latest: Bad Baby Names: The Worst True Names Parents Saddled Their Kids With—And Now You Can Too! by Michael Sherrod and Matthew Rayback. It's full of crazy names pulled from actual U.S. federal census records—Hades Fryher, Holiday Bible, Sink Slappey, and Money Scales included—as well as 2,000 others. You'll find it in your local bookstore or online at <[www.ancestrystore.com](http://www.ancestrystore.com)> this spring.*







## Great Time for Debt

NEVER IN HISTORY HAS there been a better time to be in debt. While a blemish on a credit report might mean loans are harder to come by, consider what your ancestors might have faced:

Debtors prisons go back at least to the Hammurabi Code (1795–1750 BC), when, as an alternative to jail time, a debtor could pledge himself, a family member, or a slave as a *mancipium* to work off the debt.

Ancient Roman law allowed debtors to be cut into pieces and distributed proportionally among creditors; later laws provided for seizure of property and “infamia,” or shame of the debtor.

In England, the 1542 Act Against Such Persons as Do Make Bankrupt marked the beginning of laws that allowed imprisonment of debtors, liquidation of assets, and eventually included capital punishment or loss of an ear for perjury or fraud committed by a bankrupt.

By the mid- to late-19th century, debtors prisons were abolished in the United States and the UK, although certain factors surrounding current debts (failure to pay child support, tax evasion) can still land a person in hot water and potentially behind bars.



## Bringing Home the Bacon

HOW MUCH DID IT cost to bring home the bacon? Back in 1890, you had to earn 12 cents to bring home a pound of it; in 1930, 42 cents; 1950, 64 cents; and today, more than \$4.00. Sound expensive? Read on.

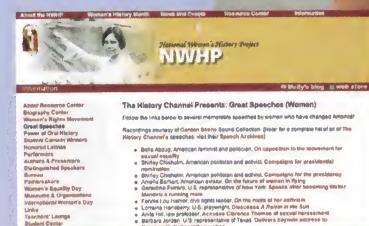
A dozen eggs cost about 20 cents a dozen in 1890; today those same 12 orbs can put you back as much as \$4.00, at least for the organic ones. Throw a pound of coffee on your tab (40 cents in 1920, and thanks to specialty coffee shops and stores, \$12 today) and your hearty breakfast becomes a very valuable commodity.

But fret not. While prices keep rising, so do family incomes. Today's family spends about 9 percent of its annual income on groceries. Back when a gallon of milk—delivery and all—cost a mere 28 cents (1930), food ate up 24 percent of a family's pay.

## Women's Words

WHILE MARCH IS WOMEN'S History Month and June marks the 160th anniversary of the Seneca Falls Convention, you can find the words of inspiring females online anytime. Visit the National Women's History Project to listen to speeches—each delivered by women—that made history. And, while you're at it, consider recording the words of your own family's modern-day, illustrious women. Learn the best way to capture her take on history with StoryCorps's DIY Guide.

• [WWW.NWHP.ORG/RESOURCECENTER/SPEECHES.PHP](http://WWW.NWHP.ORG/RESOURCECENTER/SPEECHES.PHP)





# Revisit Their Everyday

BY CANDACE L. DORIOTT

## Invitations

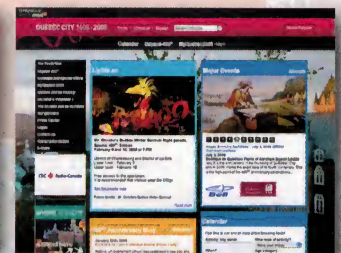
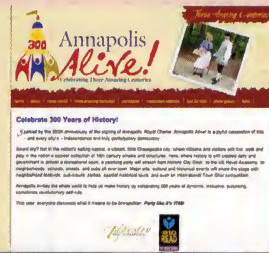
Early settlements in the Americas were sometimes risky propositions. Four that survived and prospered have festivities planned in 2008 to celebrate landmark anniversaries. Greensboro, North Carolina, turns 200; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, celebrates 250 years; Annapolis, Maryland, commemorates 300; and Canada's Quebec City, founded in 1608, is throwing a birthday bash worthy of its 400-year history. If your ancestors had connections to any of these cities, you'll want to join the party.

• [WWW.GREENSBORO200.COM](http://WWW.GREENSBORO200.COM)

• [WWW.IMAGINEPITTSBURGH.COM](http://WWW.IMAGINEPITTSBURGH.COM)

• [HTTP://ANNAPOLISALIVE.ORG](http://ANNAPOLISALIVE.ORG)

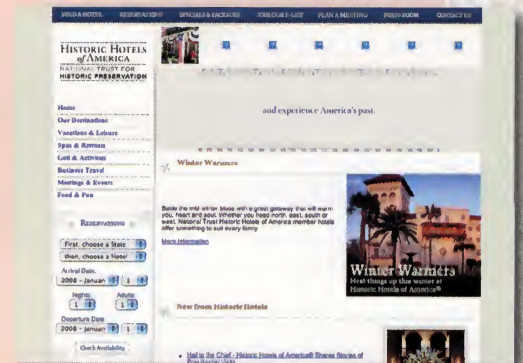
• [HTTP://MONQUEBEC2008.SYMPATICO.MSN.CA](http://MONQUEBEC2008.SYMPATICO.MSN.CA)



## Sleeping Historical Beauties

Next time you travel, consider staying at a historic hotel. According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, more than 200 hotels have "maintained their historic integrity, architecture and ambience" to become one of an elite list. Stay in an original colonial home in Williamsburg, Virginia; the 1887 Victorian-style Grand Hotel on Michigan's Mackinac Island; or the Mission Inn in Riverside, California, an architectural mélange of Southwestern and Mediterranean styles that has its own docent-led history tours. Other options include Art Deco gems, a Shaker village, and even a steamboat.

• [WWW.HISTORICHOTELS.ORG](http://WWW.HISTORICHOTELS.ORG)



## Taxing Times

Take a break from your own 1040 and look at the one your ancestors dealt with in 1913. Learn more about why we have taxes, or delve into a sordid history that includes arson (to cover up pension fraud) and murder (by a jilted lover) at the U.S. Treasury. Want something tamer? The treasury also hosts a Web page devoted to the dog that guarded the first U.S. Mint.

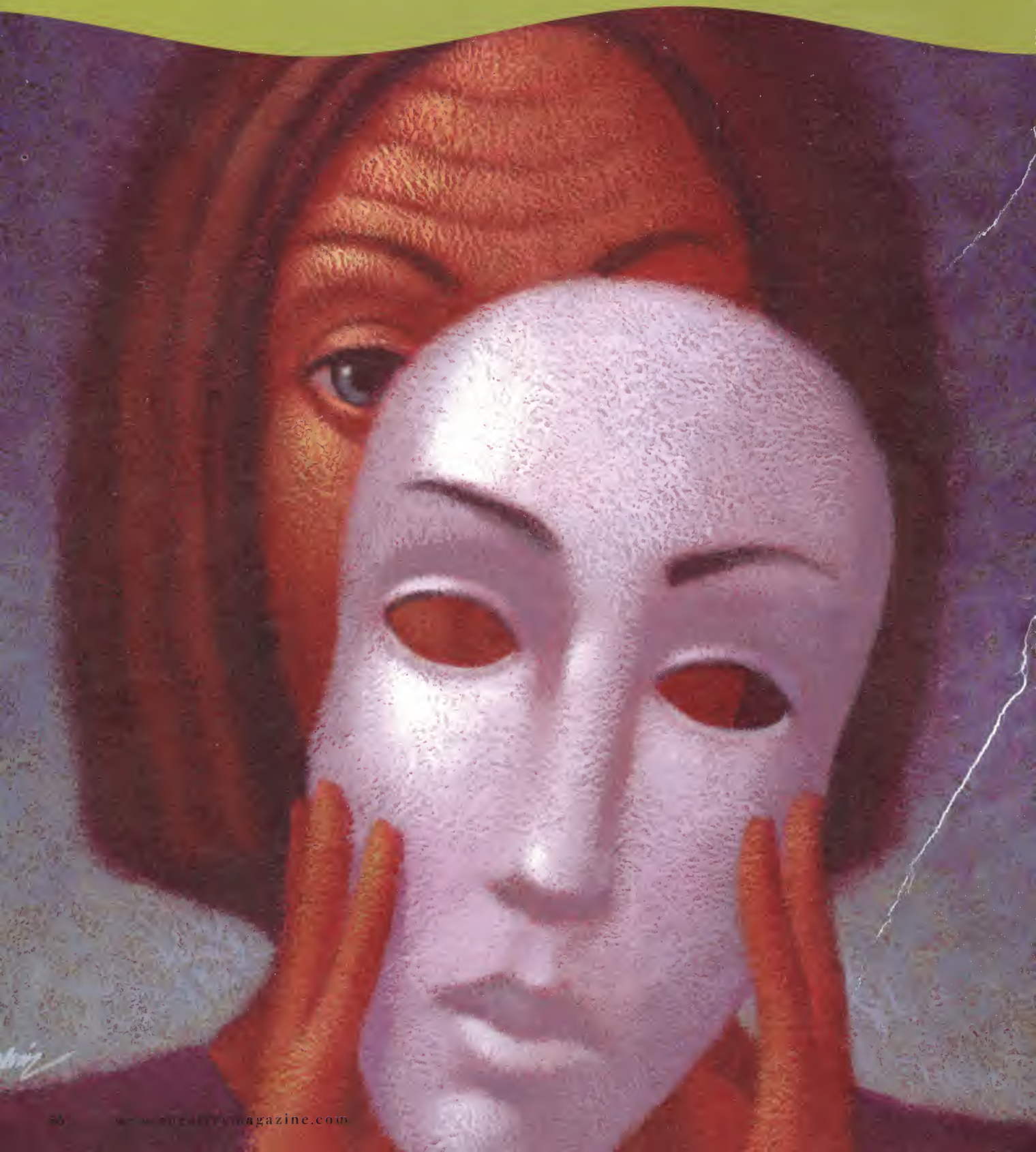
• [WWW.IRS.GOV/IRS/ARTICLE/0,,ID=149200,00.HTML](http://WWW.IRS.GOV/IRS/ARTICLE/0,,ID=149200,00.HTML)

• [WWW.USTREAS.GOV/EDUCATION/HISTORY](http://WWW.USTREAS.GOV/EDUCATION/HISTORY)



TOMORROW

# Who Do You T





# Think They Are?

**Maybe** *the most personal thing any of us owns is our name.*

*But when we started asking around for tales of people who went through life with first names other than those they had been given, we opened a whole closet full of folks who weren't who they—or others—always thought they were.*

Sometimes a name change is a **choice.**

Sometimes it's an **accident.**

Sometimes there is even a bit of **subterfuge.**



Or sometimes, it's just faulty memory. Philip Crawford's Uncle Victor started out life as Victor Charles Crawford—he was an adult before he learned that his birth certificate read Victor Woodrow Crawford. As the story goes, Victor's mother sent her husband to take care of the birth certificate formalities. When Victor's father forgot the middle name, he simply named his son Woodrow, after the current president. But he also made a point of not mentioning this change to his wife. Victor carried on his own version of the tradition by never getting around to telling the story to his own children, who knew their father as Victor Woodrow and were puzzled when they came across old documents in which their father had the middle name of Charles.



Patricia Duffy Terho's family history includes one of those now infamous "my name was changed by immigration officials" stories. Her grandmother, Bridget Walsh, left Ireland for the United States in April 1899. And that's when her name was changed by an American immigration official at the Port of Galway, Ireland, who told her, "I'm changing your name to Delia. There are too many

## The history of surnames includes names

given to differentiate one person

from another by means

of a trade or  
a feature or a place.

Bridgets in the United States already!" Meanwhile, as officials transcribed the sound of the family name phonetically, Bridget's surname went from Walsh to Welch on the ship's manifest. Her certificate of landing, dated 5 May 1899 at the Port of Boston, identifies her as Delia Welch.

"All of her brothers were given the surname of 'Welch' at that time—same official. Her youngest sister, who had not moved to the United States at the same time because she was still a child, came about 10 years later. ... She's the only one who retained the Walsh last name," Patricia says. Her grandmother "often retold this story to others. She said she readily accepted the name change if it meant she could come to the United States. She must not have disliked the name too much because, years later, she named her first daughter Delia." Today, Patricia is simply glad she heard the story from her uncle. "I could have wasted hours and hours researching Delia Welch and not ever have known that I really wanted Bridget Walsh."

### Altered Egos

Some people have their new names thrust upon them. Others choose their own.

James Lindsley's great-grandmother was born Lavisa Watkins Lunbeck—a name she hated. She chose to be known as Itie instead. Aside from Lavisa disliking her

given name, James isn't sure why she chose Itie: "It may have been a variation of 'Ittie' or 'Itsie' since Lavisa was a very short lady. She was photographed with her sister-in-law ... and barely reaches [her] shoulder." But Itie she was and remained, on documents for her marriage, the births of her three sons, her death certificate, and even, James notes, set in stone: "She is buried next to her parents at Grandview Cemetery, Chillicothe, Ohio. Her tombstone reads 'Itie Lindsley.'"

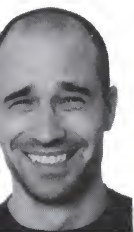
Other parents (or perhaps the children themselves) apparently thought better of a name that may have seemed good at the time. Jo Sapp of Columbia, Missouri, reports that Earl and Dora Barnhill's 10th son, born in October 1908, appears as Halley's Comet Barnhill in the 1910 census for Hopkins County, Texas. Jo wonders if maybe the name was a bit of a joke for the census taker, but in any case, H.C. ended up known in his adult life as T.G. (Trevor Gordon) Barnhill until he died in Dallas in 1964.

Cleveland Evans (named for a grandfather named for the president rather than the city and author of *The Great Big Book of Baby Names*) went to school with a girl whose parents disagreed on what to name her. "Her father got to the birth certificate first and named her something like Barbara Ann, but her mother was very stubborn, so she always called the girl Mary Sue, which is what she wanted." Mary Sue is the name everybody knew her by, and inevitably, at the beginning of every school year when the teacher read the official name from the roll, this girl had to raise her hand and ask to be called Mary Sue—until her 16th birthday, when she asked if she could have her name legally changed as a present.

### Mistaken Identities

The history of surnames includes names given to differentiate one person from another by means of a trade or a feature or a place: Baker, Armstrong, Whitehouse. Donna Fritz's third great-grandfather Peter Beech Fork Adams took on his unique middle name when he was mistakenly charged for another man's victuals. "He used the odd-sounding middle name to distinguish himself from another Peter Adams in the area. The story goes that the other Peter left a bill at the local store and 'my' Peter ended up paying for another's groceries as a result in the mix-up of names. I guess he was the first victim of identity theft."

And speaking of curious handles, Carol Thompson wondered for years why everybody called her cousin Harry Vasey, Budgy. She couldn't see anything about him





### Your Man Friday? Not in Italy

What happens if you try to name your son "Friday" in Italy, "4Real" in New Zealand, "Metallica" in Sweden, or "@" in China? You risk running afoul of the law.

Italy is one of a number of countries with laws on the books intended to prevent parents from giving children names that might subject them to shame or ridicule. To judges in Genoa, Italy, the name Friday—which a couple tried to give their newborn son a few months ago—conjured up demeaning images of Robinson Crusoe's manservant. Plus, that day of the week is also associated with bad luck.

Scandinavian countries have some of the strictest laws governing first names. Kirsti Larsen went to jail because the name she wanted to give her son ("Gesher," the Hebrew word for *bridge*) was not found on a list of approved names for Norwegian tots. Norway's law reaches back to the 1800s and protects children from names that would look or sound strange. Under Swedish law, tax authorities can nix a name they think could become troublesome for a child or first names that "have the character of a surname." (Though they did relent just last year and gave Michael and Karolina Tomaro approval to name their daughter Metallica.)

In Denmark, names must pass muster with the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs and the Ministry of Family and Consumer Affairs. Parents who don't want to tangle with the approval process can simply choose from a list of approximately 7,000 preapproved monikers (3k male, 4k female). France had laws on the books until 1993; Germany still does: names must reflect the child's gender and not expose him/her to ridicule. Quebec has recently relaxed its own government involvement in the name game, while Venezuela is considering regulations to curb names such as Hitler, Nixon, or Yusnavy.

Chinese authorities took a slightly different tack: the parents of young @ will have to choose a different name because the @ symbol simply doesn't appear in the Chinese language.

And little 4Real? Though the government put the kibosh on using a name with a digit in it, the parents insist they'll call him 4Real anyway; meanwhile, if the state won't reconsider, they'll simply register their son's official name as "Superman."

Italy

Norway

Denmark

Sweden

France

Germany

Quebec

China



that would remind someone of a parakeet. Finally, she approached an aunt, who explained that “when Harry’s father died shortly before Harry was born, even with family help, his mother was put on a strict budget. Of course, the baby’s needs came first, and his mother began to refer to him as ‘my little budget,’ later shortened to ‘Budgy.’”

Records hold lots of secrets that research uncovers. Vicki Youngblood Reynolds discovered that her father, Morrell Glenn Youngblood, had been born George Logan Youngblood when she went searching for his birth records. “I found a delayed birth certificate that his mother applied for when he entered the Navy in World War II. However, there was also a birth certificate for George Logan Youngblood, born May 22 of the same year. George Logan was born to the same parents and was a single, live birth, so I knew this infant wasn’t a twin that had died.” Her father had always celebrated his birthday on May 21, and Vicki knew this had to be more than coincidence. Then an aunt told Vicki that her grandmother had always wanted to name her first son Glenn.

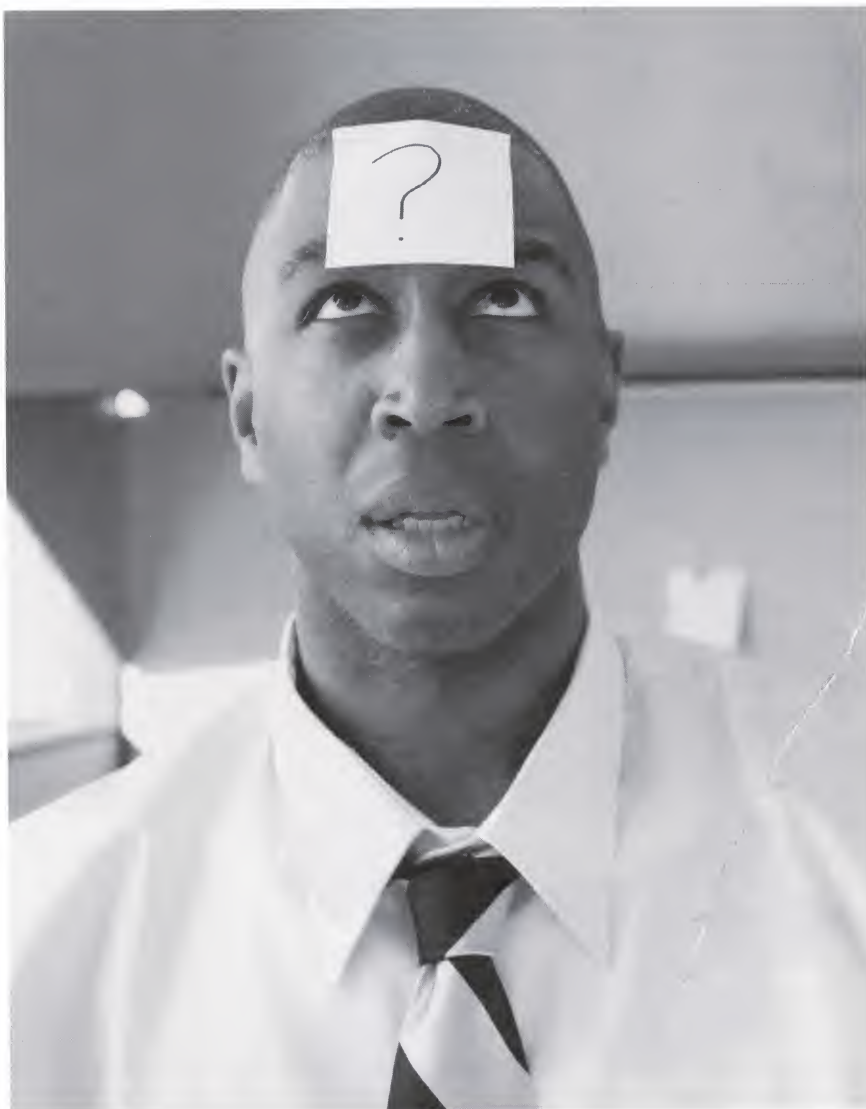
“We assume that someone who attended the birth probably named him George Logan, but Grandma did not like the name and called him Glenn. ... After my discovery, I had fun sending him two birthday cards, each addressed to a different name.”

When Tom Everson of Noblesville, Indiana, and his wife started researching her family tree, they found a James Dilley born on the same date in 1915 as Robert Paul Dilley, Tom’s father-in-law. “As we knew just about all the Dilleys in that county, we were puzzled.” They stopped by the Dilleys’ house on the way home to ask if they knew who this James Dilley would be and got a surprising answer. “It was [my wife’s] father. Her father was born at home, and the doctor, when he got in town, wrote what he *thought* they were going

to name the new baby.” The certificate was recorded and no one ever bothered to change it or even really notice. Robert hadn’t known about the mix-up himself until representatives from the U.S. Army knocked on his door near the beginning of World War II to ask why he—or James, as they believed him to be—hadn’t registered for the draft.

### Surprise Endings

James L. McCauley Jr.’s research revealed that he might have been born Eldridge Davidson McCauley Jr. if it hadn’t been for an apparent—and long-forgotten—second thought on the part of his grandparents. When a search for his father’s birth certificate came up empty, James asked for any McCauley born on 24 August 1922 in Bexar County,





Texas. He received a record for an Eldridge Davidson McCauley, born to parents Robert Davidson McCauley and Stella Lucille McCauley. "It was my father. My father was unaware of this, because he had never seen his birth certificate. ... Neither he or his older brother Robert ... knew that he had a different name at birth. My father had always been known by James L." The elder James was simply stunned. He "didn't believe me at first. He lives in Honolulu, so when I told him over the phone, he thought I was joking. When I told him I had the birth certificate from the state of Texas, he asked me to send it to him."

Today, James Jr.'s theory is that Eldridge Davidson took the name James Louis at age three months, when he was baptized. "When you are baptized a Catholic, it is not uncommon for the child to take some part of the godfather's name. My father's godfather was his mother's brother, Louis Garcia. Also, on my grandfather's side, there are many James McCauleys further back in time. So I think by the time the baptism came, they compromised and chose the name James Louis McCauley."

Meanwhile, James suspects that Eldridge Davidson had been a further nod to the paternal side of the family. There was precedent in the McCauley family of using the mother's maiden name as a middle name, which is where James Jr.'s grandfather (Robert Davidson McCauley) got his own middle name. The family also sometimes passed on brothers' names to sons, and Robert Davidson McCauley had a brother named James Lexie McCauley—James L. "That's why I also think my father's name was a good final compromise. Since James L. was like James Lexie, and Louis fit with my uncle Louis Garcia (James Louis). But that is just my deduction from what I know about each side of the family. No one knows for sure."

Confused? So are we. And so are the host of family historians out there looking for ancestors with names that aren't what they've always believed them to be. But whenever a name comes from, eventually, as it did for Bridget Walsh/Delia Welch, a name becomes an identity—whether the name change happened centuries ago or just a few years back.

Philip Crawford tells a story about his cousin Earl, who has always gone by Shorty Bastin. "One day someone called his home asking for Earl Bastin. His teenage daughter said, 'Nobody here by that name' and hung up. Her mother asked what the caller wanted, and then said, "'Why did you tell them that?'"

"'There's nobody here named Earl.'"

"Your father's name is Earl."

That's right: Shorty's own daughter had never heard her father's name.

### Till Death Doesn't Us Part

After you live with a name long enough, you are who you are, regardless of what a piece of paper might say or what a parent might have wanted.

## Confused?

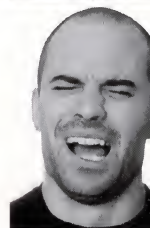
So are the  
family historians

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believed them to be.



Shanna Jones's Great-aunt Lois Ann felt that sentiment when Shanna's research uncovered christening records that revealed Lois Ann's name to be Anna Louise. "She said she was too old to change it now!"

Lezley K. Barth's grandmother, Freda May Westfall Newitt, had been Freda all her life to family, to friends, and on legal documents—at least until it came time to apply for Social Security benefits. The state of Indiana had no record for a Freda May Westfall, though they had a Fredaricka.

"You could hear her reaction to the discovery and this name all the way to our house. She could not imagine why no one in her family had bothered to share this vital information with her; after all, it was HER name. It's a wonder the then-deceased family members didn't hear her on 'the other side.'"

"My grandmother passed away in 1967. Both her death certificate and gravestone bear the name 'Freda'—as she would have wished."

**PAUL RAWLINS** is a writer and editor who is still coming to terms with having been given no middle name at all.



# Simplifying Laws of Attraction

BY STEPHEN C. YOUNG

I HAVE KNOWN FOR OVER TWO DECADES that my third great-grandparents, John Young (1785–1865) and Mercy Brown (1794–1845), settled near Toronto, Ontario, Canada, leaving family and friends in their native Yorkshire England. Church of England records show their marriage in 1819 and the christening of five children there—John (1820), Mercy (1822), Ann Brown (1825), Thomas (1826), and Emily (1828). A few years ago, I learned of two additional offspring, Mary Foster (1831) and George Reeves (1835), in Toronto area records. Mary's birthplace was Yorkshire; George claims New York. Somewhere in that four-year interval, my family came to America.

While I could narrow my research to this four-year window, the probability of finding the Young family on a ship's manifest still seemed rather remote. I didn't know which port they sailed from in England or the port of arrival in America. Hundreds of ships traveled the Atlantic between 1831 and 1835, many crossing back and forth several times a year. In researching my family history during the past 25 years, I have been very fortunate to find a number of documents that pinpoint the dates and places of principal events in my ancestors' lives. I knew that finding my Young family's immigration record—if in fact the record still existed—would take a dedicated, sustained, and tedious effort. It was a task I wasn't willing to initiate.

That changed when Ancestry.com released its U.S. Immigration Collection, which includes ships passenger lists and naturalization records. I was pessimistic about actually finding my family in this collection but thought I'd try anyway. I typed in John Young's name; then, I remembered the futility of using a common name for my search. I replaced his given name with Mercy, his wife's more unusual given name, and hit the Search button.

Within seconds I was looking at a digital image of a Manifest of Passengers with Mercy Young and her six children listed exactly as I would have expected, from oldest

to youngest. They arrived 9 June 1831 in the Port of New York aboard the British Brig *Freak* departing from Hull, Yorkshire. I was dumbfounded. With just a few mouse clicks my pipe dream of discovering exactly when my Young family arrived in America was realized. Hundreds of rolls of microfilm and tens of thousands of pages of manuscript were dodged. And to think I had almost overlooked a basic and important research strategy: employing the more distinctive and less common names as a search criteria in our family trees. Just like using a magnet to attract pieces of metal within its proximity, searching for the unique names within a family group will often pull the more common names alongside.

Mercy's husband wasn't included with the rest of the family, so I surmised that he, like many others, emigrated earlier to find employment to finance the immigration of his family. This wasn't the case of his younger brother, Samuel Young. Another quick search revealed his arrival with wife, Mary, and daughter, Jane, on board the ship *Mersey*, departing from Liverpool on 5 September 1834. Since my great-grandfather was one of John Young's grandsons and my great-grandmother was one of Samuel Young's granddaughters, both of these passenger lists are significant to my family history.

James Young	2	3	Male
Samuel Young	35	7	Male
Mary Young	23	8	Female
Jane Young	2	1	Female

Most serious researchers would agree that personally handling and searching through primary documents for evidence of a family is preferable to trusting transcribed records and indexes. But digitized records on the Internet, further enhanced and made accessible by indexes and every-word searching, empower family historians to find new, diverse details of their family history. The haystacks are larger, the needles more numerous, and those magnets? More powerful than ever.

**STEPHEN C. YOUNG** was born in London, Ontario, and now lives in Salt Lake City with his wife, Michelle, and five children.

Mercy Young	36	—	Female
John Young	11	—	Male
Mercy Young	7	—	Female
Ann Young	6	—	Female
Thomas Young	4	—	Male
Emily Young	—	2	Female
Mary Young	—	—	Female



## Future of Fortune

My good fortune in finding the records of my family at the Port of New York in the 1830s was impressed upon me in June 2007 as I stood in front of the several film cabinets at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., containing NARA's immigration collection. Without that online database, I may never have found those records: the amount of time required to sift through all those unindexed rolls of microfilm and the mounds of manuscript they represent is unreasonable. I for one am optimistic that future research tools can and will diminish research time even more dramatically.







# The MAN Is Getting Me Down

BY IAN POPE

SOMETIMES, THE MAN gets us down. Here's an example: I just got a bonus from work and the federal government took out more in taxes than I think I actually make in a year. That gets me down. And yes, it's the Man who's doing it.

It's reassuring for me to know, though, that the Man has actually been keeping people down since the beginning of time. That may seem like a weird thing to take comfort in, but the fact that thousands, maybe millions, of people over time have managed to pass along their genetic markers in spite of the oppressiveness of the Man says something about the human spirit.

The actual phrase "the Man" is relatively new. The term cropped up in the prison system in the early 20th century as a description of the wardens, although its roots stem back to the era of slavery and Reconstruction. So who is the Man? He's the system, the powers-that-be, the force that keeps us down, whether that's a slave owner, warden, government, corporation, or whatever.

There were certainly instances of the Man in my family tree. There was the Man who forced my great-grandfather to flee from Russia to avoid being conscripted, and the one who kept his father-in-law from making money, resulting

in an occupation of "Scavenger" on the census. There was the Man who sanctioned the persecution of a number of my other ancestors, forcing them to escape murder, fire, and death.

Throughout history, the Man has taken a variety of forms, and chances are, he probably affected your ancestors as much as mine. Historically, however, the Man was actually a man. Think of the feudal lord—the Man with control over an entire group of people and the power to do basically whatever he wants. He eats, drinks, and parties, while his serfs work the land, go to war, and die in the mud.

It is not my intent to be a storm cloud over history. Instead, I find real value in trying to discover which Man kept my ancestors down because then I can start to explore the ways in which they fought back. I'm a revolutionary at heart and finding that same heart in my forebears gives me a kick. So don't let the Man get you down. Fight back.

**IAN POPE** is a writer and occasional genealogist who is genuinely interested in what you think of this article. Reach him at [mister.ian.pope@gmail.com](mailto:mister.ian.pope@gmail.com).





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## Every Picture Tells a Story

BY JANELLE WARDEN

THIS GREAT PICTURE of my husband's grandmother, Harriet May Stanley Steele, tells its own story. But from research—and the baby book where I found this photo—I learned much more.

Harriet May Stanley was born 30 October 1879, the daughter of James Stanley, builder and brick mason in New York. Harriet worked as a teacher prior to her marriage to George William Steele in 1902. At the time, George was a lawyer living in dry Manhattan. In this photo, taken during Prohibition when Hattie would have been about age 39, Hattie not only expresses her sentiment but looks as if she had her hair pertly bobbed to keep up with the times.



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